

1820

# Remarks on the Hartford Convention, or, An Exposition of the Conduct and a Development of the Ulterior Policy of the Federalists of Massachusetts, during the Late War

Unknown Author

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainebicentennial>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Author, Unknown, "Remarks on the Hartford Convention, or, An Exposition of the Conduct and a Development of the Ulterior Policy of the Federalists of Massachusetts, during the Late War" (1820). *Maine Bicentennial*. 40.  
<https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/mainebicentennial/40>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in Maine Bicentennial by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact [um.library.technical.services@maine.edu](mailto:um.library.technical.services@maine.edu).

FAMP 1399

Vickery

REMARKS

40

ON THE

# HARTFORD CONVENTION,

OR,

AN EXPOSITION OF THE CONDUCT

AND

A DEVELOPEMENT OF THE ULTERIOR POLICY

OF THE

FEDERALISTS OF MASSACHUSETTS,

*DURING THE LATE WAR.*

By a Citizen of Massachusetts.

---

PORTLAND :

. PUBLISHED BY FRANCIS DOUGLAS, PRINTER.

1820.

# THE COLLEGE OF THE CONSTITUTION

## THE COLLEGE OF THE CONSTITUTION

The College of the Constitution is a unique institution that provides a comprehensive education in the principles and practices of governance. Our curriculum is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and serve their communities effectively. We offer a variety of programs, including undergraduate and graduate degrees in Political Science, Law, and Public Administration. Our faculty consists of distinguished scholars and practitioners who bring their expertise to the classroom. We also provide extensive opportunities for research and practical experience through internships and fieldwork. The College of the Constitution is committed to fostering a culture of intellectual inquiry, civic engagement, and leadership. We invite you to join our community and explore the possibilities of a career in public service.

Our programs are designed to provide students with a strong foundation in the principles of the Constitution and the role of government in society. We offer a variety of courses, including American History, Government, and Law. Our faculty consists of distinguished scholars and practitioners who bring their expertise to the classroom. We also provide extensive opportunities for research and practical experience through internships and fieldwork. The College of the Constitution is committed to fostering a culture of intellectual inquiry, civic engagement, and leadership. We invite you to join our community and explore the possibilities of a career in public service.

Our programs are designed to provide students with a strong foundation in the principles of the Constitution and the role of government in society. We offer a variety of courses, including American History, Government, and Law. Our faculty consists of distinguished scholars and practitioners who bring their expertise to the classroom. We also provide extensive opportunities for research and practical experience through internships and fieldwork. The College of the Constitution is committed to fostering a culture of intellectual inquiry, civic engagement, and leadership. We invite you to join our community and explore the possibilities of a career in public service.

REMARKS

ON THE

HARTFORD CONVENTION....No. I

---

MESSRS. EDITORS,

A WRITER in the *National Intelligencer*, signing himself "One of the Convention," having commenced a series of papers, the intention of which is to prove that the famous *Hartford Convention*, of December 1814, has been calumniated in the ears of the American people, by those who have attributed to it the object of a dismemberment of the Union, I ask of you the favor to insert in your paper some remarks on that Convention, and on the vindication of it which this Member has thus commenced.

The objects of this Convention were so often, so distinctly, and in so vast a variety of forms, avowed, that I pledge myself to prove to your readers that these objects have *not* been mistaken; that the leading object of that meeting pursuant to a system which had been nurtured by the federal party, for years, was, either to assume a dictation over the general government which should give them an *immediate* and commanding influence in its councils—an influence wholly foreign to the spirit of our constitution, and most solemnly reprobated by the farewell injunctions of WASHINGTON—or, in the failure of this disorganizing purpose, to conclude a separate peace between a section of our country and our enemy, Great Britain, and thereby, at a blow, to dissolve our Union. It is the case of the robber: he demands my money; if I give it, well; if not, death.

Before redeeming this pledge, I would premise two remarks:

*First.* This pledge is given, and will be redeemed, without the slightest feeling of personal hostility against a single individual composing or advocating that Convention. Among them the writer recognizes some whom, in private life, he is proud to rank among his warmest friends. It is public considerations,

not personal, which induce him to expose what he verily believes to be the atrocious objects of that Convention. When parties become mutually irritated and inflamed, what is there to prevent that party which has an ascendancy, in any section of the country, from resorting to unjust and ruinous measures of policy, unless, it be the fear of public indignation when these measures shall have been subjected to the ordeal of cool, dispassionate investigation? We say, there is nothing adequate but this. And this check must be sacredly preserved. However we may be inclined, in this period of political calm, to throw oblivion on past differences of opinion, still patriotism owes a solemn duty to the republic. It owes to the republic, that the nefarious projects of the Hartford Convention should never be forgotten; that they should be held up to eternal detestation, in order that future conspirators against the republic may profit by the awful, yet necessary example. It is this feeling, and not a personal one, that will dictate our subsequent remarks.

*Second.* While censuring the abettors of that Convention, we earnestly beg to be understood not to criminate with them the whole federal party, much less the whole of New England. We have seen, with regret and surprise, in the second letter of your correspondent, (whom, for brevity's sake, we shall hereafter call "a member,") the remark, that his enquiry involves "the vital soundness of the heart of the New England population;" and that "an immense majority of the people of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, and respectable portions of those of New-Hampshire and Vermont, are emphatically responsible for the organization of that Convention, and the sanction bestowed upon its result." We protest, we utterly, we vehemently protest, against this false doctrine. It is not so. This "immense majority" NEVER existed. In proof of our position, we give the two following statements:

1. Of the votes given in New England, for the candidates of the two parties respectively, at the *first* election of the Governors of the several states after the declaration of war:

	<i>Republican.</i>	<i>Federal.</i>
Vermont, September, 1812,	19,158	15,950
New Hampshire, March, 1813,	17,410	18,107
Massachusetts, April, 1813,	42,789	56,754
Connecticut, do.	7,201	12,916
Rhode Island, do. (no candidate)		3,350
Total,	86,558	107,077

*Note.*—Rhode Island, in 1812, gave Republican 3,784, Federal 4,122.

2. Of those given for the same at the *second*:

	<i>Republican.</i>	<i>Federal.</i>
Vermont, September, 1813,	16,828	16,592
New Hampshire, March, 1814,	18,784	19,675
Massachusetts, April, 1814,	45,953	56,374
Connecticut, do.	2,619	9,415
Rhode Island, do. about	800	2,713
	<hr/> 84,984	<hr/> 104,759

The latter statement, with the exception of Vermont, shows the strength of the two parties at the elections next preceding the period of the Hartford Convention. Vermont, in September, 1814, gave Republican 17,411, Federal 17,466; making the aggregate votes at the elections next preceding, thus: Republican 85,567, Federal 105,643.

Thus we see that, in the most gloomy period of the war, the federal majority was so trifling that the change of only *one-sixteenth* of the whole number of the voters from the federal to the republican side, would have given a republican majority in New England; and that, at the period of the Convention, it was even still less.

Where, then, was the *member's* "immense majority," even on the general question between the two parties? It never existed. Much less did it exist on the question of the Convention. Let that question, fully explained in all its bearings, have been put to the people of New England, at large, and, instead of a desertion of one-sixteenth, it would have been five times that proportion. On that question, thus explained, we feel *entirely confident* that not even one-sixth part of New-England would have been in favor of the Convention, and probably not one-twentieth part.

Away, then, with the assertion, that an "immense majority," sanctioned the Convention; that "the vital soundness of the heart of the New England population" rests on this question. Born and educated in "the heart" of this population; bound to it by all the ties of nature and of affection, I will not chastise my indignation at the slander. No: there never existed a people who, from their education, their habits, their principles, their industry, and their fixed patriotism, were better fitted to perpetuate the blessings of free government, than the people of New England. So far were this people from approving the Hartford Convention, that one of the apologies used by the friends of the Convention, to appease the disappointed feelings of those Hotspurs, who had been waiting for insurrection, was, that it had been found that the *people were not yet prepared*.

If any further doubt remains of the real feelings of this people, look at New England. Where is now this "immense majority?" Where is now the federal party of New England? In *one* of the five states, it is true, they have preserved a tremulous power, by their adroitness in taking shelter behind the popularity of one amiable man. Where this power would have now been, had a certain other person ("One of the Convention") been the candidate for Governor, we leave him to say. But look at the four other states; and where is the federal party? Annihilated. Of the forty-one Representatives in Congress, elected from New England just before the Convention met, thirty-eight were Federalists—*now only six!* Does any one wish additional proof to determine what are the sentiments of "the heart of the New England population," respecting the Hartford Convention? Let them not be slandered.

## No. II.

IN our first number, we pledged ourselves to show, that the real object of the Hartford Convention was, either to assume an unconstitutional and most unwarrantable dictation over the general government, or, on the failure of that object, to form a separate peace with our enemy, and thus to dissolve the Union. We also premised two remarks: 1. That no *personal* feeling prompted us to this pledge, but that we were led to it by the conviction, that patriotism demands of every citizen an eternal reprobation of that disorganizing convention. 2. That we disavow all intention of criminating the whole federal party, much less the whole New England population, in relation to that Convention; and that the allegation of "One of the Convention," that an "immense majority" of Massachusetts and other states, and "the heart of the New England population," is responsible for that Convention, is a gross libel on New England.

In support of the last remark, one fact was omitted. After stating that the complete and almost immediate prostration of the federal party, in four of five of the New England states, vindicated the *people* of those states from the charge of participation, and that a similar fate in Massachusetts had been avoided only by the popularity of *one* man, we ought to have added the following fact: In February, 1816, one year after the Convention, Gov. Strong declined a re-election to the office of Chief Magistrate. A federal caucus was held, and Mr. OTIS, who had been a member of the Convention, was requested to be the candidate. It was, however, *perfectly* understood that this was a mere form,

a mere compliment to *distinguished* services ; that Mr. Otis, though styled "the man of the people," "the beloved Otis," *could* not be elected ; and that the reason why he could not was, simply and solely, his connection with that Convention. Mr. OTIS, therefore, as was intended, declined.

Now, permit us to ask, where was at that time the "immense majority" of Massachusetts in favor of the Convention ? The fact shows a striking contrast between the opinion of Mr. OTIS and the assertion of "One of the Convention."

We proceed now to the main subject—the objects of the Convention.

The Member, in his four letters already published, rests his vindication of the Convention on three points : the *recorded* legislative proceedings of the states engaged in the project, the Journal of the Convention now open to inspection, and the printed Report of the Convention. Because no declared intention of dissolving the Union is found in these records, the Member infers, that no "fair and correct evidence" of such intention exists. Does the Member need to be informed, that this inference is wholly unsound ? Does he need to be informed, that neither treason nor misdemeanor delights in open day ? Foolish indeed beyond all example, would have been such a declaration from the implicated legislatures. Far more prudent was it to do what they did do ; to lay out the broad field of "public grievances," through which the Convention might range at pleasure, and plant whatever noxious weed should be found most congenial with the soil.

But it seems the report of the Convention does not recommend a dismemberment ; and the identical journal itself is now open to every eye. The writer of these remarks has not yet taken the pains to see this precious document, now first exposed ; nor does he much care to see it. Who can believe that a body of men, whose objects were so suspicious that the veil of *closed doors* must be drawn between their doings and the public eye—even the eye of their own political friends—would still be so wanting in sagacity, as to commit to writing that portion of their deliberations which they were sure would meet with public reproof ? We do not think so meanly of their prudence. Nor does their *report* prove a tittle more. They met, they talked, they looked on all sides—they found, as their own friends acknowledged, that *the people* were not yet prepared ; they found that, to pass the Rubicon *then* was to ensure their own destruction ; and they therefore wisely, very wisely, preferred discretion to the worst part of valor. They preferred to wait. They therefore recommended, among other measures, that application should be made to



the general government for redress of grievances, (in pursuance of which advice, certain commissioners came on to Washington, and went back again;) and that, if this step should fail of obtaining what they wished, (of which *office* may possibly have been a part,) "ANOTHER CONVENTION" should be held in Boston the June following, "with such powers and instructions as the exigency of a crisis so momentous may require." And their leading writer (L\*w\*ll—Boston Centinel, January 14, 1815) when apologizing to their "active spirits" for the tameness of the Convention proceedings, explicitly called on the general government to "tremble (if they did not wish to see CONFUSION) at the result of the proposed Convention in June."

Such is the defence of the prisoner at the bar. His three witnesses prove nothing: they merely give the *negative* testimony that *they* did not see the criminal act; while every one knows that the act may have been committed, in all its blackness, without the slightest cognizance on their part.

But one of the witnesses does not stop here. The printed report testifies positively *against* the defendant. It discusses, through several paragraphs, the topics of the defects of our constitution—of their incurableness—of the expediency of a "dissolution" of the "Union"—of "open resistance"—of the proper time for this dissolution—and of "some new form of confederacy" for "those states, which shall intend to maintain a federal relation to each other."

Such is the testimony of the defendant's own witness; and are we now to be insulted by the remark, that this Convention never thought of a dissolution of the Union; that its only object, its kind, benevolent, patriotic object, was, to aid the general government in defending a portion of its country? Away with such an insult.

Having spoken of the negative testimony adduced in defence of the Convention, we shall in our next proceed to the positive testimony against it; and prove, we trust, that public sentiment has done an act of simple justice, by consigning the memory of the Hartford Convention to permanent disgrace.

### No. III.

THE almost unanimous re-election of Mr. Jefferson, in 1805, forbad all hope in the breasts of those who opposed his administration, that they could ever regain the control of the National Councils. The love of political sway is an unconquerable passion. It is not, therefore, extraordinary, perhaps, that some of

the most ardent leaders of this opposition, in the firm persuasion of the wisdom, the disinterestedness, and the singular efficacy with which their management of affairs would be stamped, should really wish to govern a hardy, industrious, and intelligent section of the republic, rather than that their talents and virtues should lie almost useless to their country.

When, therefore, the embargo, in 1808, had produced a sectional feeling in New England, opposed to the National Administration, and had given to the Federal party a leading influence in the State Governments of that section, much exertion was made to convince the people of those states, that they had very separate interests from those of the southern states, and that the General Government was determined to support the latter, and to crush the former. Inflammatory appeals were made to the public ; and frequent and explicit threats were given of direct resistance to what was called the despotic and wicked arm of the National Government.

From a subsequent disclosure it appears, that, during this period, *Henry*, the Agent of the Governor General of Canada, was actually within this excited district of our country, for the express purpose of tampering with the *apparent* disposition of some of our citizens to secede from the Union. If his testimony is admitted, and we do not see reason to doubt it, a division of the Union was at that time seriously agitated. In a letter to Gov. Craig, dated "Boston, March 7, 1809," he distinctly declares :

"I have now ascertained, with as much accuracy as possible, the course intended to be pursued by the party in Massachusetts that is opposed to the measures and politics of the Administration of the General Government.

"I have already given a decided opinion, that a declaration of war is not to be expected ; but, contrary to all reasonable calculation, should the Congress possess spirit and independence enough to place their popularity in jeopardy by so strong a measure, the Legislature of Massachusetts will give the tone to the neighboring states ; will declare itself permanent until a new election of members ; invite a Congress, to be composed of Delegates from the Federal states, and erect a separate government for their common defence and common interest."

Some, perhaps, may seek to weaken the force of this testimony, by attempting to discredit the witness. But, we ask, on what grounds is this done ? Aside from the appearance of truth attending the whole correspondence, there are several circumstances which strongly corroborate it.

In the first place, this testimony very fully coincides with the tone of the federal prints and federal resolutions at that period. Threats of resistance were frequent and pointed ; and deliberate remarks on the expediency of a dissolution of the Union were now and then advanced—though instances of the latter were few, since, as *Henry* expresses it, they found it 'a very unpopular topic.'

In the second place, Henry was known to be an intimate associate with many of the leading federalists of Boston. He was once on a short excursion of pleasure with several of them, when they happened to need the company and aid of a farmer—a plain honest rustic. In the course of the conversation, this very subject of a separation of the states was discussed ; but they disagreed respecting the line which should form the limit of the new confederacy—whether the Hudson, the Delaware, or other boundary. At length, recollecting their companion, they asked him what side he would take when the question should come to issue. He frankly answered, that he should take the side of his country, whoever should be its enemies. This the writer of these remarks had from the farmer himself, and his character stamps the account with entire credit.

In the third place, the plan avowed by Henry coincides remarkably with that developed and partially executed, six years after, near the close of the war. War was declared ; the legislature of Massachusetts gave the tone, and invited a Congress (or Convention) of delegates from the federal states ; and the object declared by “ One of the Convention ” is the same as that declared by Henry—“ common defence.”

This plan, developed by Henry, was to have been executed immediately after the New England elections, in April, 1809. But, in that very month, *Erskine's arrangement* was concluded, and demolished the whole plan of operation.

In the year following, the republican party once more gained the ascendancy in Massachusetts, and retained it till 1812. No opportunity, therefore, of executing the project of 1809 occurred, till the declaration of war against Great Britain, in June, 1812. In August, 1812, the project was resumed, not by the legislature of Massachusetts, as Henry avowed, because the Senate had a decided republican majority, which would have embarrassed the operations. County meetings were therefore called, and delegates appointed to “ a State Convention,” which should take the place of the legislature in giving “ the tone ” to the other states.

It was at the Boston meeting for this purpose, that the patriotic DEXTER stepped forth from his party, and boldly advocated the cause of his country. The shock was instantly felt. His voice was the bolt of Heaven ; it spread dismay in the breast of faction. Though several counties actually appointed delegates to this “ State Convention,” yet the “ *lethalis arundo* ” of Dexter stuck fast : the project languished, and died.

If the real objects of this Convention are doubted, the doubt is removed by the following remarks of Mr. Dexter at the above meeting :

"Let it be remembered, that resolves and conventions, promising as much good to the public as the one now contemplated, and not more threatening in their language and aspect, have, within our own recollection, preceded one insurrection, [Shay's,] which shook this commonwealth to its centre, and threatened to draw the neighboring states into its perilous vortex ; and another [in Pennsylvania] which required the strong arm of the national government to quell its lawless and desolating fury. Permit me to add, those who deliberately originate and aid insurrection by seditious resolves, are at all times amenable to the laws for the consequences, and generally more guilty *in foro conscientæ*, than the inconsiderate rabble whom they instigate to murder and treason."

And he afterwards expressly says, that "a separation of the states" is suggested, as one of the objects of the proposed Convention.

Such is the account given of it by Mr. Dexter, who, we must remember, was up to that moment one of their own party, and was therefore undoubtedly made acquainted with their whole views. Coincident with this, their papers openly spoke of a dissolution of the Union, as a less evil than the destruction of their commerce.

But the manly opposition of Dexter, united with the republican majority in the Senate, disheartened their councils, and the project once more slept, till the winter of 1813-14. Of its revival at that time, we shall speak in our next.

## No. IV.

In May, 1813, the federal party obtained a majority in all branches of the government of Massachusetts. Massachusetts was, therefore, now ready to prepare for giving 'the tone,' to the neighboring states. As, however, the legislative session at that season is always very short, and as the patriotic TOMPKINS had, after a warm contest, just been re-elected Governor of New York, a state on whose aid the Conventionists had rested many hopes, it was thought expedient to defer commencing operations till the following session, in January, 1814. Accordingly, previous to the session, great exertions were made to induce the people of the different parts of the state to send in petitions to their legislature, depicting, in lively colors, their distresses, and calling on the state government to afford them relief. It should be noted, however, that, of the four or five hundred towns (i. e. townships) in the state, only about thirty-five petitioned. Still this number was sufficient to make a sound. As a specimen, we give the following extract from one of the petitions :

"We remember the resistance of our fathers to oppressions, which dwindle into insignificance, when compared with those we are called upon to endure.

The rights 'which we have received from God, we will never yield to man.' We call upon our state legislature to protect us in the enjoyment of those privileges, to assert which our fathers died, and to defend which we profess ourselves ready to resist unto blood,"

So promising were the signs of the times, that the leading federal paper of Boston (Centinel, January 5, 1814,) made this proclamation :

*"A crisis is at hand.*—From every quarter we hear of deep and loud discontent at the conduct of the war, and of fixed resolution to set on foot spirited and constitutional measures to restore peace."

Just at this moment, however, an unlucky incident occurred, On the 30th December, 1813, the Bramble, a British flag of truce, arrived at Annapolis, bringing news of the refusal of England to accept the mediation of Russia, but of her willingness to open direct negotiations for peace. This news reached Boston about eight days before the meeting of the legislature. Instantly all was aback. The goodly materials of resistance and disunion were scattered and disjointed by the rumors of peace. Though the memorials from different parts called loudly for aid, especially against the embargo of December, 1813; though the newspapers, during the session, were occasionally invoking the legislature to 'face the foe,' meaning by 'the foe' the government of the Union—yet, after much consultation, the leaders deemed it most prudent to postpone the project to a more fit opportunity. They, therefore, contented themselves with a long and inflammatory Report on the subject of the memorials. Among other things the report says :

"We spurn the idea that the free, sovereign, and independent state of Massachusetts is reduced to a mere municipal corporation, without power to protect its people, and to defend them from oppression, from whatever quarter it comes. Whenever the national compact is violated, and the citizens of this state are oppressed by cruel and unauthorized law, this legislature is bound to interpose its power and wrest from the oppressor his victim."

"The question, then, is not a question of power or right with this legislature, but of time and expediency."

"Ardently desiring peace, they [the committee] are disposed to allow the government some time longer to prove its sincerity, and to retrace its steps."

"And the committee doubt not that the real friends of peace will continue conscientiously to refrain from affording any voluntary aid or encouragement to this most disastrous war."

Among the remedies discussed in the report, one is a Convention of Delegates from certain states, "to propose, urge, and even insist upon, such explicit declarations of power or restriction, as will prevent the most hardy from any future attempts to oppress, under the color of the Constitution." But for this remedy, they were not then prepared, though they declared the right of resorting to it. The truth is, the arrival of the Bramble had disconcerted all their plans.

As great expectations, however had been formed by political zealots, of the interposition of the state, an apology was due for the disappointment of these expectations. Accordingly, the Centinel, in announcing the adjournment of the Legislature, made the apology. It began thus :

"The adjournment of the legislature, without some *effectual interposition* for the relief of their suffering constituents, will have created disappointment in many instances to friends and enemies. It is well known that a firm and intelligent majority sufficiently numerous to *look down* all opposition were prepared to adopt any measures which the conviction of sober judgment would justify ; and that the great body of the people of this state were ready to support the legislature in any course which they might have authorised. It is also an agreed point, that the tyranny and oppression resulting from laws made in violation of the federal compact, would have justified the people of this commonwealth in performing the great duty of *self-protection*, for aid in which, if requisite, there is sufficient assurance of co-operation, from other states whose circumstances are similar, arising not from compact, but from known disposition, and the feelings of good fellowship and mutual interests. There was in short no obstacle to the execution of any system, which might have been resolved on that would not have vanished before the Majesty of the New England Lion, rising in his strength."

In the close, several reasons are assigned for their "dignified forbearance." The first is, the hope of such a change in public opinion as would produce reform "without open or violent collisions, which once commenced might not be easily appeased." Another is, that "laws framed for the express *and innocent* purpose of protecting the coasting trade and fisheries ; or a convention of delegates for the definite objects of redress of grievances," might have retarded peace—that "an open opposition here, though professedly confined to particular laws," might have "outraged or intimidated our Cabinet into concessions of *Eastern Interests*." Another is, the hope of peace. Another—"there is time enough yet—the spirit of the country will not be broken in ninety days, unless it be already too base and degenerate for patriotic exertion."

This manifesto bears the plain stamp of *authority*. It was evidently written by some leading Conventionist.

Such was the issue of the *third* attempt at organizing opposition to the union. The first attempt in 1809, was defeated by Erskine's arrangement ; the second in 1812, by DEXTER ; and the third, in January, 1814, by the Bramble. In our next we shall remark on the fourth and last attempt, in the autumn of the same year.

## No. V.

ON the 24th of August, 1814, the British entered Washington. About the 30th, the news of the event reached Boston, and was received, by some of the heated leaders of disunion, with open expressions of exultation. This was the moment for their favorite project. The capital sacked and burnt; the victorious Vandals on their march to Baltimore; Eastport and Castine captured; an enemy's fleet on Lake Champlain, boasting its superiority to our own, and on the point of an attack; an army of 14,000 men, partly Wellington's troops, led by Wellington's Generals, and all headed by the Governor General of Canada, co-operating with this fleet, ready to drive from Plattsburg a few regulars and militia, and intended to proceed thence and winter in Albany or New-York, and perhaps be met there by Ross, from Washington: all this, joined by the news from England of an immense expedition ready to sail for some part of the American coast, pointed out to the leading actors at Boston *that* juncture as the moment fitted for the *fourth* attempt to put into successful operation their machine of disorganization. If Gov. Prevost, as he confidently expected, had penetrated to Albany, New England would have been almost cut off from the rest of the Union. A Convention, therefore, assembled at Hartford, or any other place near Albany, would have been ready to arrange such articles of capitulation and neutrality, as should suit the views of the two contracting parties.

Accordingly, on the 7th of September, four days before the repulse of the British at Plattsburg and the capture of their fleet on Lake Champlain, Gov. Strong issued a proclamation for convening the legislature of Massachusetts, on the 5th of October; and the same number of the *Centinel* which published this proclamation, (September 10,) contained a very conspicuous essay, headed "The Crisis," which gave a clue to the objects of this session, and of which the following are extracts:

"*What then shall we do to be saved?* One thing only. The people must rise in their majesty, PROTECT THEMSELVES, and compel their unworthy servants to obey their will. Love to the constitution, which has been so shamefully abused, will preserve Mr. Madison in his chair until his term expires; but he ought to be compelled to use his powers to save the country from utter destruction. He ought to be compelled to dismiss his whole corps of incompetent or corrupt ministers, and replace them with men of fortitude and love of country."

"Let our legislature, when assembled, choose commissioners, and invite the neighboring states to do the same. Let these delegates proceed to Washington, or wherever else Mr. Madison is to be found, and tell him that he ought to change his ministers and his measures; that he *must* abandon the invasion of Canada—to say *conquest* would be ridiculous; that he ought to

show to the nation with whom we are at war that those men who made that war when Bonaparte was making his last attempt to subjugate England, through Russia, are not in power ; that he must, if necessary, recal some of his present obnoxious Envoys, and appoint others ; and that he must make one fair and honest attempt to obtain peace, without cunning or equivocation. If he will do this, peace will be had—my life for it ; if not, the country will rise, *as one man*, to finish a war, then, and not till then, just and necessary. If he will not do this, but will continue to prefer his party to his country, these delegates should be empowered to adjust terms of union with other states, and to *make a peace for themselves*. Self-preservation, the great law of nature, requires this, and it is worse than idle to expect any other course. The Union is *already dissolved*, practically.”

Under such auspices, and with such views, was issued the proclamation for convening the legislature. Instantly, however, an untoward event dimmed the horizon of this young day of independence. On the 11th of September, the British fleet on Lake Champlain was annihilated, and the grand expedition of Prevost was repulsed at Plattsburg. By this blow the hope of *immediate* aid from the British army, in severing New England from the rest of the Union, was destroyed.

At the same time the destruction at Washington and the plunder of Alexandria had excited the feelings of *the people* against the enemy, and led them to vigorous and *united* preparations for defence. This was a grief to the leaders in disunion, as it produced a direct counteraction to their favorite object. In the Centinel of October 1st, in a column, headed “*All the objects of the war attained*,” this spirit of union is severely reprehended.

“Prior to the war, (says the writer,) the moderation of Great Britain, in sending minister after minister, and submitting to every contumely, in order to preserve peace ; the generous spirit she had displayed in the defence of the liberties of Europe,” &c. &c. “had gone far to overcome that bitter spirit which the war of the Revolution had excited.” But *now*, the writer complains, “there is as hopeful a stock of exasperation collected as Mr. MADISON could desire.” He closed by recommending that the “Legislature should vote that it is inexpedient longer to prosecute this ruinous war, and should pray the President to remove from his councils all persons who are unfriendly to peace, or who have advised to this rash measure ;” and that, “amidst all our calamities and exertions, the deepest toned sentiments of indignation should be heard against those wicked counsellors,” who plunged the nation into war.

The repulse of the British at Baltimore also, (the news of which was published in the Centinel without a single expression of joy, without a single *Laus Deo*,) contributed still further to cast a gloom over the prospects of the Conventionists.



But these events, unpropitious as they were, could not extinguish the courage of the leaders in this drama. The plan of either compelling the National Administration to give up the power to themselves, or negotiating a separate peace with the enemy, was a darling of too great promise to be disinherited by the force of a few trifling incidents. The Legislature had been summoned. The Rubicon was before them. On their own bank of the stream, nothing was found but the blighted husks of despair : on the other, their eyes were greeted by the luxuriant buds of hope, and the ever blooming laurels of office. Could human nature choose but pass ?

The legislative drama shall be noticed in our next.

## No. VI.

ON the 5th of October, 1814, commenced the special session of the legislature of Massachusetts ; a session got up expressly for maturing the convention project. On the very first day of the session, the following motion was made in the House :

*“Moved,* That a committee be appointed to confer with the New-England states, and see if they will agree to appoint a committee to join them, and repair to the City of Washington immediately and without delay, then and there personally to make known to the President the general opinion of all the New England states in regard to the present war, and the manner in which it has been conducted—and inform him that he must either resign his office as President, or remove those of his Ministers and other officers of the general government who have, by their nefarious plans, ruined the nation—with leave to report by bill or otherwise.”

This laughable motion was a rather premature throe. The full time had not arrived, and the apparatus of accouchment was yet unprepared. The mover, though one of the oldest members of the House, and though sufficiently important to be one of the electors of President in 1816, still had not that acuteness and that boundless range of political vision, which are necessary to lead a party in crises of “great pith and moment.” He had read in the papers deemed by him oracular, and also undoubtedly been told the same by his party, that Mr. Madison *must* resign, or at least turn off his Secretaries ; and that the legislature had been called together for that very purpose. What more natural then, than a desire to lead in this chivalrous enterprize ? To seize the earliest moment—to be the *first* to step forth to the work of Augean purgation, and open a new vista of saturnian prosperity to his country—was a thought too brilliant to pass idly away. It fastened on his mind, and proved its energy by the fact of the above motion.

So premature however was this motion deemed by his friends that, on the day following, he was induced to withdraw it, "with a view of altering its phraseology!" On the fourth day he renewed it "as amended:" but what it was "as amended," we have not been told; nor does any trace of it appear after this on the published record. It seems to have been a complete abortion.

About the same time, a motion was made in the Senate, by a very conspicuous and leading member, to assume the taxes levied by the general government within the state, and to turn them into the state treasury. This was a favorite object in the career of independence. The right of taxing, and that of making war and peace, were attributes of sovereignty which were to constitute the foundation of the new confederacy. This motion, however, like that in the house, was premature, and it was withdrawn.

On the 8th of October, the committee to whom had been referred the Governor's message, made a long report. In this they say, that the resources of the state cannot be supposed sufficient both for the defence of its soil and for the payment of the increasing taxes of the national government; and that "there remains to them, therefore, no alternative but submission to the enemy, or the control of their own resources to repel his aggressions. It is impossible to hesitate in making the election. This people are not ready for conquest or submission." The control of the resources of the state seems thus to have been resolved on. They also recommend "a radical reform in the national compact," and conclude their report by several resolves; for raising an army of ten thousand men, for borrowing one million of dollars, and for appointing delegates to a New England Convention. These resolves were passed, after an animated discussion of four days. During this discussion, full confirmation was given, if confirmation was wanted, of the objects of the Convention. *We will not* pay our money to aid in carrying on this war in Canada—said the leading advocate of the Convention in the House: and the Senator above alluded to, in his speech on the occasion, has the following expressions:

"If the ship is sinking, through the indifference or perverseness of those to whom the command has been entrusted, has the God of Nature implanted in us any principle which forbids a single mariner to abandon her, and to seek for safety by seizing upon any plank that may offer, and casting himself into the bosom of the deep? if the nation is rushing rapidly to destruction, by measures in which we have had no agency, and which we have resisted to the utmost extent of our constitutional power, shall we sit with folded arms, and submit silently to our fate, or cut the knot, and sever ourselves from the mighty ruin? Let self-preservation, the first and paramount law of nature and of nations, answer the inquiry?"

"The hand of the architect must be speedily employed, either in razing it [the constitution of the U. States] to the ground, or in re-building it, with in-

creased magnificence and splendor." "Sir, when the spirit and essence of the constitution have fled, the lifeless form is no longer worth preserving; and the parchment on which it is written, may as well be thrown away, to become food for worms, as to be preserved in your national archives."

That the army of ten thousand men, authorized at this session to be raised by the state, was intended less to contend against the enemy, than to awe the national government, and that portion of the citizens who steadfastly adhered to that government, is a fact too clear to be doubted. Were they wanted to resist the enemy? The letter of Gov. Strong to Mr. Eustis, the Secretary of War, dated Aug. 5, 1812, answers, *no*. Gov. S. says:

"Every harbor or port within the state has a compact settlement, and generally the country around the harbors is populous. "The militia are well organized, and would undoubtedly prefer to defend their fire-sides, in company with their friends, under their own officers, rather than to be marched to some distant place, while strangers might be introduced to take their places at home.

"In Boston the militia is well disciplined, and would be mustered in an hour, upon any signal of an approaching enemy, and in six hours the neighboring towns could pour in a greater force than any invading enemy will bring against it.

"The same remark applies to Salem, Marblehead, and Newburyport; places whose harbors render an invasion next to impossible."

"Kennebunk is unassailable by any thing but boats, which the numerous armed population is competent to resist. Portland has a militia and independent corps sufficiently numerous for its defence, and the same is the case with Wiscasset and Castine. [Mark Castine.]

"Against predatory incursions the militia of each place would be able to defend their property, and in a very short time they would be aided, if necessary, by the militia of the surrounding country. In case of a more serious invasion, whole brigades or divisions could be collected seasonably for defence."

Here the charge, so often and so vehemently brought against the National Government for deserting Massachusetts and leaving her a defenceless prey to the enemy, is explicitly refuted by Gov. Strong himself. At the very opening of the war, when the National Government were preparing additional defence, it was told that Massachusetts needed it not; that she was able, by her excellent militia, to defend herself, either against "predatory incursions" or against "more serious invasion." Was the National government bound to disbelieve Gov. Strong—to give him the lie? No—his word was taken as truth; and Massachusetts, under his guardianship, was considered safe.

Where, then, we again ask, was the necessity of an army of ten thousand men? It was to support the measures about to be taken by the Conventionists. They knew that they had but a bare majority in New England, even on current party questions: and they knew that when their whole plan should be developed, an immense majority would be against them, unless they had a strong military force ready to put down the first symptoms of

rebellion against their unrighteous power. Had Prevost's expedition succeeded, a much smaller force would have been deemed sufficient: that, however, failing, ten thousand were necessary.

That such was the object of this army, further proof is at hand.

## No. VII.

To prove still more clearly that the army of ten thousand men had, for its real object, the support of the Hartford Convention and its measures, and that the object of the Convention was to seize on the taxes levied by the general government, and to make a separate peace with the enemy, unless its advocates should be admitted to control the national councils, we give the following extracts from the *Boston Centinel*, of Nov. 26, 1814. They are from No. 9 of a series of essays, addressed to the President of the United States, on the subject of the Convention, published originally in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, but republished by the editor of the *Centinel* with express approbation, and the declaration that they contain "the opinion of a well informed writer on the subject" of the Convention.

It is useless to say, that this was an anonymous essay. The conclusion is irresistible, that it had the approbation of the leaders of the federal party. If it had not had, they *must* have remonstrated against it. They would have said to the editor of the *Centinel*, "Sir, you are ruining us. Your paper is the leading paper of our party; it circulates among all classes, and to a greater extent than any other paper in the state; yet in this paper you are diffusing sentiments which we abhor. You are openly advocating the assumption of the national taxes; a separate peace with the enemy; a dissolution of the Union, and a new confederation of a portion of the states; objects most pointedly denounced by WASHINGTON. You are ruining our party. We, therefore, furnish you with a disavowal of these objects, and demand of you to publish the disavowal. If you refuse this, or if you continue to avow such detestable doctrines, we discard your paper, withdraw our support, and use our combined influence to check its circulation."

Such would have been, such *must* have been, the language of the leading federalists to Major *Russell*, if they had disapproved, as they ought, those doctrines. This, however, they did not do. *Not one* *lip* of disapprobation appeared in the *Centinel*. The doctrines, therefore, passed for (what they most unquestionably were) the views of the leading federalists. The extracts follow:

"To the cry of *disunion* and '*separation of the states*,' there is a very plain and obvious answer. The states are already separated; the bond of Union is already broken—broken by you [Mr. Madison] and the short-sighted, selfish politicians who compose your councils. All that we see in you, and in them, as rulers, are the convulsions which precede and announce dissolution. The New-England delegates may aid in the arrangement of the *succession*; but they could not, if they would, arrest the progress of death."

"The war is the most pressing and obvious evil; but all who hope for a radical cure, and a restoration of former vigor, must prepare for more thorough changes than peace can effect. But peace demands, and will no doubt receive, the first consideration."

"If they [the Convention] find that war is to continue, it is to be hoped they will recommend, and that the states will adopt the recommendation, *that no men or money shall be permitted to go out of New-England until the militia expences, already incurred, are reimbursed; nor until the most ample provision is made for the defence of the New England states during the continuance of the war.*" "If the New England states determine **TO PAY NO MONEY, and SEND FORTH NO MEN**, while the war continues, until their own defence is provided for, they may save themselves.

"This arrangement may do while the war lasts. But is the war to be eternal? Are the New England states, who are now unquestionably absolved from all obligations to the United States, since the United States have ceased to perform any of its obligations towards them, to continue the war, if they can make peace? It is clear that you, Mr. Madison, cannot make peace. Would not you, and all your Southern friends, feel heartily obliged to the New England states if they would make a fair and honorable peace with the enemy, and provide in the treaty that each of the several states that might think fit to become a party to the treaty, should have the right to do so?" "It was to take care of our commercial rights, as you say, that you made the war. Would it be unreasonable for us to take care of them ourselves in making a peace? The Convention cannot do a more popular act, not only in New England, but throughout the Atlantic states, than to make a peace for the good of the whole.

"There may be some tender-nerved gentlemen who may be startled at these propositions; and there are, probably, some *grown up* people, who, in the language of the nursery, are afraid of *pokers*. Such gentlemen must comfort themselves with the reflection, that if the people find their able, and honorable, and wise men unwilling to lead the way to a peaceable and lawful remedy of evils, they will undertake to do this work for themselves, and may not, while heated in the chase, know when they have pursued far enough to accomplish their object.

"The several states may make treaties with foreign powers, by the consent of Congress. If the confederacy has been broken up by the acts or omissions of the United States, the several states may make treaties without such consent. And whether the confederacy may be considered as broken up, or not, the states may make whatever arrangements they think fit with foreign powers, to save themselves from utter ruin, because the duty of self-preservation is superior to all other duties. As the New England states have always been sincerely attached to the Union, and are still desirous that it should be preserved, a peace made by them would promote this object, and open the way to a new and durable alliance among the states, founded on the necessary amendments of the present national compact.

"It is to be hoped that the Convention will see fit to propose a more general Convention of the states, including all *north* of the *Potomac*, for the purpose of forming a new confederation, *grounded on experience*; without, however, excluding the southern Atlantic states. We always did feel, and

we continue to feel, a sincere conviction, that the northern states and the southern Atlantic states, have a community of interests, and a natural dependence on each other. We lament that the mad policy of rulers, who have sacrificed every thing to party, should have put at risk this natural connexion. The New England states dread a separation. They see in it great and embarrassing evils; but they see, in the present course of things, evils of a much more imposing and ruinous character."

In addition to these views, the *Centinel* of Dec. 7, 10, and 17, 1814, contained three essays, headed "*the Crisis*," evidently written by one of the prominent Conventionists, still more fully developing their views. The Convention, it will be remembered, commenced its doings, Dec. 15, 1814. Extracts follow :

"The crisis is come—the time is in our hands, when our conduct must decide whether prosperity and happiness, or misery and disgrace, are to fill up the after lives of ourselves and our children." "It is time to act. We have talked too long. We have emboldened our enemies, and made ourselves ridiculous." "We talked of 'our sighs and tears,' as if we were a land of women, and not of men. Had we commanded, and not prayed—had we told the Government that the embargo was an outrage upon our liberties, which would not be endured a single day," &c. New England "will now meet every danger, and go through every difficulty, until her rights are restored to the full, and settled too strongly to be shaken. She will put aside all half-way measures; she will look with an eye of doubt on those who propose them; she will tell such men, that, if they hope to lead in the cause of New England independence, they must do it in the spirit of New England men."

"We must retain the means necessary to our self-defence. We must no longer be drained by taxation and enlistment."

"Those who startle at the danger of a separation, tell us, that the soil of New England is hard and sterile."—"Do these men forget what national energy can do for a people? Have they not read of Holland? Do they not remember that it grew in wealth and power, amidst contest and alarm? That it threw off the yoke of Spain, (our Virginia,) and its chapels became churches, and its poor men's cottages, prince's palaces? If the dissolution of the Union would bring those evils with which their fearful imaginations are teeming, &c."

"They [the Convention] see that no palliation half-way measures will quell their [the people's] irritation." "Shall we withhold our men and money from the Government, and when it is filled with unleavened malice at our opposition, leave it to the most malignant spirits can wait upon her vengeance, to make a peace for us with our enemy? Shall we set at naught the power of Government, and then throw ourselves on the magnanimity of a boisterous CLAY, a jealous and vindictive ADAMS, a cunning GALLATIN, and a RUSSELL?" &c.

"There are still a few who have started at the sound of eastern neutrality, and a treaty of commerce with England. They tremble, too, at the name of a Convention." "Have restrictions and war become so dear to us, that a peace and commerce with the world would arouse the minority and drive our friends from us? Would release from taxes, which must otherwise be laid, make the people uneasy, and throw them into the arms of the General Government? Our course is so easy and plain, that I know not how the most timid can pause at the entrance upon it." "A peace with England for a single year, would bring every state east of Virginia into our confederacy."

"Should that peace be deferred, how long would the rulers of the several [New England] states maintain that popularity necessary to our preservation."

"It is said that to make a treaty of commerce with the enemy is to violate the constitution, and sever the union. Are they not both already virtually destroyed? Or in what stage of existence would they be, should we declare a neutrality, or even withhold taxes and men? Let us leave it to the schools to put this question at rest, while we are guarding the honor and independence of New England. By a commercial treaty with England, which shall provide for the admission of such states as may wish to come into it, and which shall prohibit England from making a treaty with the south and west, which does not grant us at least equal privileges with herself, our commerce will be secured to us," &c.

"Throwing off all connection with this wasteful war, making peace with our enemy, and opening once more our commerce with the world, would be a wise and manly course. The occasion demands it of us, and the people at large are ready to meet it."

"What have we to fear, though the malice of our rulers be unsated? Can their scanty, unpaid soldiery arrest us on our way; or their black population overrun New England? Can a government, drained of wealth, and as void of credit as of honor, subdue us to its lawless will?"

"We must put away our childish fears of resistance." "Let us linger a little longer; let us wait till the United States' armies are filled, by bounties or conscription; let us look on in silence, while our population, disappointed of protection at home, is moving westward. Then, beggared and dwindled in numbers, with veterans for enemies, will we begin the work of New England independence. This ever lingering, timid spirit, is not that which achieved our old independence."

Another series of numbers, addressed to the members of the Convention, and signed "Epaminondas," was published in the *Centinel*, from Dec. 21 to Jan. 10, breathing a similar spirit of rebellion. Take the following sentences:

"Advance boldly to the task assigned you. Suffer yourselves not to be entangled by the *cobwebs* of a compact which has long since ceased to exist." "Remember the heroes of the revolution—invoke the spirits of OTIS, ADAMS, and HANCOCK—the GENIUS of NEW ENGLAND beckons you forward. Our fathers bled at Lexington and Bunker's Hill; their children cannot be slaves." We are prepared to "obtain by *force* that redress which has been denied to *remonstrance*." "NEW ENGLAND IS UNANIMOUS, and we announce our irrevocable DECREE, that the tyrannical oppression of those who at present USURP the powers of the constitution is beyond endurance, and WE WILL RESIST IT." "We solemnly DECREE, that delay can no longer be suffered; we will make our last and desperate struggle against the *tyrants*."

Extracts might be multiplied almost without end—but, enough. Be it again remembered, that this *Centinel*, the leading paper of the party in New-England, was loaded week after week with these flagitious appeals, *without one single sentence of disapprobation to counteract them*. The conclusion, therefore, is full—is irresistible, that they expressed the views of the leaders of the party. To reject this conclusion would be to reject the plainest rules of evidence, the strongest dictates of common sense. Disunion, therefore, was the object of the Convention; and the army of ten thousand was intended to guard this object from defeat.

Our next will conclude.

## No. VIII.

GENTLEMEN,

IN closing these remarks an apology is due to yourselves, and to your readers, for the imperfect manner in which the remarks have been presented. The apology is found in the very small portion of time which the writer has been able to give them, not a sentence of which has had a second draft; in the want of engagedness, produced by an entire conviction that very little attention would be given by the public to an elaborate series of remarks on a trite subject, while such unusual interest continues to be excited by the leading topics of the day; and in the difficulty of exhibiting a lucid and yet concise statement of facts, where the materials are so abundant in quantity and so various in kind. Let this apology suffice.

So numerous, indeed, are the documents in proof of the treasonable objects of the Convention at Hartford, that we have been able merely to glance at some of the most prominent. A volume only would embrace the whole. The following incidents we will just name :

1. The act of the legislature of Massachusetts, refusing to the United States, after the expiration of thirty days, the use of the prisons of the state for the safe-keeping of the British prisoners of war.

2. The motion made by Mr. *Otis*, in the House of Representatives, to support the Governor of Vermont in his disorganizing attempt to withdraw a certain portion of the militia from the service of their country.

3. The disapprobation implied in a legislative call made on General *King*, for information respecting the aid given by him to the raising of volunteers in the District of Maine, for the defence of the country.

4. The exemption from blockade given by the enemy to a portion of our coast, on the avowed ground of the friendly views of the inhabitants of that portion of country towards the enemy.

5. The legislative designation of a town by the name of the military chieftain of the nation with whom we were at war, and announcing such designation in large capitals, just after having withdrawn the name of one of our own patriots, the second officer of the republic, from a town which had borne it for nearly thirty years.

6. The numerous seditious sermons uttered from the pulpit; some openly advocating a separation of the states.

7. The annunciation, by the Centinel, of the concurrence of Connecticut in the appointment of Delegates to Hartford, under



this head : " SECOND PILLAR *in a new* FEDERAL EDIFICE reared ;" and that of Rhode Island, " THIRD PILLAR RAISED."

8. The calmness with which persons of intelligence and political character talked of *fighting*, and dismembering the Union ; and the declaration, after the war, that nothing but peace prevented such dismemberment.

9. The convention of inn-holders, &c. in the counties of Hampshire, Franklin, and Hampden, at Northampton, about the last of December, 1814, while the Convention at Hartford was sitting ; and their resolution, passed and published, that they would not take out licenses for the new year, and pay the duties on them, until they should learn the decision of the Convention at Hartford.

10. The resolution passed at a meeting at Reading, (Mass.) that they " would not enter their carriages, pay their continental taxes, or aid, inform, or assist any officer in their collection."

Add to these that mass of evidence at which we have glanced in our preceding numbers ; the striking coincidence of the plan developed by *Henry* with that adopted in 1814 ; the abortive attempt of August, 1812, declared by one of their own party to be no less threatening in its character than the rebellion of Shays, in 1786 ; the renewed attempt, in January, 1814, defeated by the prospects of peace ; and the last attempt, commenced in Sept. of the same year, and continued till the actual arrival of the treaty of peace, during which time the Centinel was devoted to seditious appeals to the people, on the necessity of assuming the national taxes, of resisting the national government, and of making a separate peace with the enemy, without a single sentence from any quarter in disapprobation of these appeals :—add all these, and we have a chain of indissoluble proof of the disorganizing objects of the Convention, which no ingenuity of its advocates can sever.

" One of the Convention," in seven letters, has attempted to prove that the Convention had no reference to a dissolution of the Union. Has he done it ? Not at all. We have already said, that his prominent argument rests on the fact, that neither the previous legislative proceedings, nor the journal or report of the Convention itself, advocate such a dissolution. And we have already replied, that this fact proves nothing. The conspiring legislatures could not be so foolish as to avow the object distinctly. Nor could the Convention be so short sighted as to commit to paper those proceedings which they found it necessary to veil from the public eye by closed doors. As to the report of the Convention, the editor of the Centinel, so early as Nov. 26, 1814, in delineating the probable course of the Convention, had declared, " They probably will not adopt any important measure

of that project in New England, bears witness. All bear witness, that the *people* were pure from the contamination.

Again too we protest against the imputation of personal motives in these remarks. WASHINGTON himself shall be our advocate, whose farewell injunction bids us "*discountenance whatever may suggest even a suspicion that the Union can in any event be abandoned, and indignantly frown upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest.*"

MASSACHUSETTS.

P. S. Since the above was written, the writer has received a letter from a certain patriot in Massachusetts, whose ardent devotion of a long life and of distinguished abilities to the service of his country, both in civil and military offices of the highest responsibility, entitles him to the endless gratitude of the republic. In noticing the declaration made by "One of the Convention" respecting the want of the means of defence on the sea-board of New England, he makes the following remarks :

"At that time, [1814] Boston harbor was fortified with two strong enclosed forts and several well-constructed large batteries, with an ample supply of cannon, mortars, and all kind of ammunition, and upwards of three hundred regular troops ; and in all the principal ports and harbors, from New Haven to Passamaquoddy, were regular well-constructed forts and batteries, with a full supply of cannon and ammunition, and regular troops at each post sufficient for managing the artillery ; and, with such aid as might have been afforded by the militia of the vicinity, every point on the sea-board could have been very well defended. But that aid, with some few exceptions, was refused. The supply of the munitions of war was so ample, that, on the request of the Governor of Massachusetts, he was supplied, on loan from the United States, for the use of the militia, with upwards of twenty field-pieces, mostly twelve pounders, well mounted, and furnished with from thirty to forty rounds of fixed ammunition each, and with one hundred thousand musket balls, fifty barrels of powder, &c. &c. and was also furnished with one thousand muskets. And there had been previously furnished by the United States, from two to six 24 or 18 pounders, mounted on travelling carriages, with a supply of powder and balls, to Newport, Bristol, Marblehead, and Salem, Beverly, Newburyport, Portsmouth, and Portland, with suitable buildings for the safe keeping of the cannon, &c. If the Governors of the other New England states had, with that good faith and patriotism, turned out the militia on the call of the President, as the Governor of New Hampshire did, we should have had nothing to fear from the enemy on our coast ; nor would this state have been reduced to the humiliating necessity of praying Congress to relieve us from a burden laid on the citizens of the state, by the treacherous conduct of their Governor and his advisers."

This highly satisfactory statement, united with that given by Gov. Strong himself, as quoted in a preceding number, must put to eternal rest the charge, made against the National Government, of neglecting the defence of New England.

M.

definitively at their first session." This original intention was confirmed by the conviction, that the people were not yet ripe for resistance. Another Convention in June, therefore, was recommended, and the national government distinctly threatened with the "*confusion*" that awaited that epoch. As the co-operation of a British army at Albany was no longer expected, Hartford was no longer a suitable rendezvous for these patriots. June would be the season for a British fleet on our coast. Boston, therefore, was a place peculiarly fitted for requisite negotiations, and Boston was selected, as the theatre of the second Convention.

Again, however, we say, and let the fact be ever remembered, that the printed report of the Convention itself, without any reference to the proposed second Convention in June, gives abundant proof that the leaders in that project have forfeited the confidence of their country. That report itself proves, that the expediency of a "dissolution" of the Union, of "open resistance," and of some "new form of confederacy," was actually discussed in the Convention. And now, forsooth, "one of the Convention" presumes to talk of "the chimera of a Northern Confederacy." It was in truth a chimera—a monster dire; not generated by the enemies of the Convention, but the Conventionists themselves, who thus publicly acknowledged their relationship to the illegitimate hantling. Were no other evidence furnished, this report would be an everlasting witness of the justice with which public indignation rests, and always will rest, on that iniquitous Convention.

Were not our own patience, and that of our readers, quite exhausted with this topic, we should certainly follow the member through his letters, and comment on some of the very strange and very indefensible positions which he has assumed. Better amusements could not be found, nor an easier task undertaken. But we must spare ourselves and the public; especially as there is not even plausibility in his inferences, which demands the commentary.

Again we protest against the member's calumny, that the *people* of New England are answerable for the demerits of the Convention.

An "immense majority" abhor its memory. The intrepid HOLMES, and a band of intrepid colleagues, bear witness with what fearless determination the whole project from the beginning to the end was resisted. The military companies which were silently organized, and ready to take the side of their country the moment the overt act of resistance should be committed, bear witness. And the present irrecoverable prostration of the leaders