

The National Intelligencer,

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PAID IN ADVANCE.

FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

Thoughts on the policy of limiting the right of the General Government to lay taxes.

Every friend to the harmony and perpetuity of the Union must desire a removal of those just grounds of jealousy and apprehension which many of our best citizens have in different degrees entertained. Among these, perhaps no one has had deeper influence than the uncontrolled power of taxation possessed by the general government. It is well understood at the present day that wealth, either belonging to an individual or a nation, confers power; and in proportion as this wealth is exclusive of the wealth enjoyed by either, does it bestow exclusive power. Give a government money to the extent it desires; and it will want no portion of power it covets. If it does not seize it by violent, it will gain it by silent means. If it does not take it by force, it will underwrite by stratagem. Little will be said, but much will be done.

It is not unjust to say that it is the tendency of all governments to encroach upon forbidden powers; nor perhaps is this disposition the least operative under republican forms, where the administrators of the government, often actuated by the same motives, do not so much consider the nature of the power they exercise, as the good they seek to accomplish; virtuous men themselves easily pass the barrier of right, and seldom reflect on the injury that may be done by bad men in the abuse of that very power, which, in the hands of integrity, diffuses the most beneficial influence.

It is then, the province of wisdom to use the use of authority, to diversify its liability to abuse, and to direct its force against it.

Hitherto, it is true, we have seen but few ill effects proceeding from the uncontrolled power of taxation, with which the general government is invested. But if a cool review of the subject, on a retrospective view of what has actually occurred, compared with what may occur, it shall appear that the peace of the Union may at some future day be affected by a continuance of the present state of things. It is not a day of the first magnitude, to seek a remedy, and thereby to prevent an evil which every patriotic citizen must desire to remove, or at any rate to place at the greatest possible distance.

The efficacy of our government consists in the sovereignty of the state as well as the federal government. From the former we derive almost exclusively the security of our lives, liberty and property. To them we are indebted for nearly the whole of those comforts and conveniences which arise from internal improvement. To them we owe almost all the *semblable goods* we enjoy. While to the general government we chiefly owe our exemption from foreign danger. From the state authorities we derive positive advantages; by the general government we are secured from possible evils.

Our happiness certainly depends upon both. And if the dependence be not equally great, it is unquestionably justified to render both the objects of our affection and respect.

Again, the general and state governments mutually depend upon each other. From the general government the States receive an energetic defence against external danger, and against any unfortunate collisions of interest which may spring up among themselves; while in its turn, the general government receives its strength from the States in the creation of a constituent member of its Legislature, as well as in the provisions made by them respecting the election of other national functionaries.

The true friend then of the Constitution is he who treats with equal respect the federal powers of both these descriptions of government. If there be any difference in the measure of our regard for either, the general government must receive a preference; as its existence would be independent of the general government, while without them the latter would not exist a day.

It is presumed that there are conclusive reasons in favor of those constitutional provisions which, as far as regard revenue, shall make each description of government independent of the other; unless there be other reasons, of greater force, on the side of a different doctrine. Let us discuss. Briefly weigh those which have heretofore been offered.

It is said, 1. That it legitimately appertains to the nature of a free government to possess the unlimited right of taxation; that the government of the U. States is sovereign, and that therefore it should enjoy the unlimited right of taxation.

It is pointed out that such has heretofore been the doctrine in relation to other governments than those of the free States. But from whence has the doctrine sprung? Most evidently from the dissimilarity of those governments from ours. In viewing Europe, we contemplate systems of government, involved with unlimited powers; we contemplate governments in which all the powers are delegated either by express or implied grant. Whereas the U. States present a different spectacle. For here we behold, first, the people possessed of all power; secondly, that people delegating certain powers to their state governments; thirdly, that some people delegating certain other powers to a general government; and in both cases reserving, in express terms, certain powers to themselves, or to the State governments; and in some equally express denying certain powers to both descriptions of government. It follows irresistibly that both the state and general governments are sovereign, and as certain *expressed objects*, and that while the governments of the old world possess an *absolute*, our governments enjoy a *limited* sovereignty.

2. The nature of the services, deductible from a free uncontrolled premises, will form a satisfactory answer to that objection to limiting the right of taxation of the general government, which arises from the very nature of the objects to be effected by the general government, and the equally extensive resources required for the accomplishment.

The very nature of the United States being our constitutional guardian against internal as well as external danger, and being the distributor of justice to a large portion of our citizens, should possess all that power which is requisite to insure the accomplishment of these great objects; that in common times, to produce this effect requires large resources; that in periods of eminent political peril, not only the greater part, but the whole resources of the community may be required; and that these resources ought to be under the instantaneous command of some national organ, (of course the general government) which is able to resist any emergency it may be able with success to repel any threatening danger.

By this reasoning it may be replied that the very nature of the arguments above that in common times an unlimited right of taxation is not necessary. Indeed to contend for its necessity would be to contend for that which would in effect entirely subvert the entire basis of the government, and without pecuniary aid only to be obtained from taxation. The arguments then can only apply to *uncommon times* that may be periods of great national calamity, such as that which has recently occurred, famine, or war. To the cases of pestilence and famine the above ideas do not apply. The very opposite ones prevail. For that which is the most destructive agent in such cases is the general government. Such provisions belong exclusively to the State governments; and if the occurrence of such calamities be contended and be provided for, then does it follow, according to the above train of reasoning, that the State governments, and not the general government, should possess the unlimited right of taxation.

It will be observed that the federal powers are not likely to encroach in the United States, and of consequence that any argu-

ments drawn from them, other than those already cited, merit but little regard.

The great national calamity contemplated must be WAR. This is indeed the greatest destroyer of human felicity. In the unbridled violence of its appetite it consumes, at one meal, the profuse harvest of years of industry and enterprise.

(To be Continued.)

May 12, 1861.

Sir,
Mr. Duane, editor of the Aurora, has frequently stated that the publisher of the Middletown, D. was removed from office, that the publisher at Easton, Penn. had made a bonfire of newspapers, and that the publisher of the Aurora, when the latter was slated to him, replied in an *insolent and threatening* style, directing him to go to Easton and profane. Although Mr. Duane was wholly mistaken in each of these charges, at least with regard to the fact and fact, no notice was taken of them until lately the publisher at Easton, Penn. demanded the charge to go as respected himself. I requested Mr. Duane to publish his letter on the subject, and also to give him the name of the author, both of which were refused. As the Aurora passes through many hands which do not reflect the United States, I thought the publisher-general should be told to give Mr. Dick's letters, both to Mr. Wayne and to Mr. Duane, a place in your paper.

I am Sir,
Your obedient servant,
ABRAHAM BRADLEY, jun.
MR. SAMUEL H. SMITH.

Easton, (P.) May 1, 1861.

Sir,
The Aurora of the 10th of last month contains the following paragraph:

"How are we to account for it, that Mr. Haberman removed the publisher of Middletown, Delaware, and set the publisher of Easton, Pennsylvania; the one for sending a few subscribers to this paper, and the other for taking bundles out of the mail, and making a bonfire of them; why should Mr. Haberman, after the president Editor of this paper, informed him of the fact by letter, reply in an *insolent and threatening* style, bid the Editor go to Easton and profane?"

Confidently that the charge against me was altogether false, and conceiving myself entitled to know the name of the rascal on whose authority it was published, I sent to the Editor a letter, of which the enclosed is a copy, together with the certificate therein mentioned, disproving the calumny.

As my communication has not appeared in the Aurora, I will thank you to give it a place in your paper, and am very respectfully,
Your obt. hb. fervent,

THOMAS B. DICK, P. M.

Easton, (P.) April 17, 1861.

Sir,
I have read with considerable astonishment, in your paper of the 10th instant, an insinuation against me in my official capacity as deputy post-master.

As the paragraph alluded to, is a most infamous and malicious calumny, I trust you will do me the justice to declare the name of the person, on whose information and credit you thought proper to hazard the insinuation.

Well aware that my declaration alone would be insufficient, with some of your readers to rebut a charge made in terms of unqualifiable abuse, I have taken the trouble to procure from some of your most distinguished and respectable friends in this place, the enclosed certificate; which, together with this letter, I request you will publish.

THOMAS B. DICK, P. M.

Mr. William Duane.

LONDON, March 25.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

STATE OF THE NATION.

Mr. Fox, in an eloquent speech, which we lament the length of preceding speeches prevents us from detailing, commenced with considerable ingenuity upon the arguments of Mr. Pitt. Adverting to the expression made use of by the latter, that the principle advanced by the northern powers was a Jacobin principle, he observed, that he believed the principle was broached by Frederick the Great of Prussia;—whether that monarch was a Jacobin or not, he did not know, but Frederick was a philosopher, and might therefore, perhaps, in the new vocabulary, be denominated a Jacobin. He thought, however, the right hon. gentleman might as well have denominated the principle Deific, for the term would have as well suited as that of Jacobinism. He agreed with the right hon. gentleman in deploring that the bottom make free goods, nor did his honor, (Mr. Grey) contend for the principle, but upon a question of policy, whether it were a question of the ground of a declaration of war, he would have been glad to have had the honor to hold the office of Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, and which the right hon. gentleman had marked by a red ink, by such measures, though he was only in office three months; and consequently there was very little time for rash or for any other course, during that short period, he was merely yielded for his Majesty to negotiate with Russia in the manner alluded to by the right hon. gentleman, but he did it with the consent of the Cabinet, consulting his members, who all concurred in the same advice. The principle then assumed by Russia, and now by the northern powers, was not admitted by the treaty entered into with the former power, it was merely yielded for the moment as a matter of policy. Having entered into some further justification of his conduct relative to the treaty he had negotiated with Russia, and into an investigation of the neutral question, which he commented upon most of the statements of Mr. Pitt, he proceeded to the subject of the war. From the language he had heard from that side of the house he should have imagined we were at the close of the war, and that a negotiation had repeatedly been attempted, he should have supposed the last year had been marked with a series of brilliant successes; the contrary, was known to be the case. If the conduct of his majesty's ministers, said Mr. Fox, was such as it ought to be, why think from enquiry, he fearfully ever knew the house to refuse it, and until his majesty's late ministers, who had on all occasions opposed it, he knew very few instances indeed wherein his majesty's ministers were not foremost in recommending the war. Will the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Pitt) say we have gained more by this war than the enemy? Will he say, that a few islands in the East-Indies are equivalent for having destroyed the national debt? If the object of the war was the taking those islands, and defeating the power of Austria, his majesty's ex-ministers were to bear down; but if it were to bear down, they have completely failed. If enquiry was agreed to, the house would not have that papers the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Duane) pleased to take out of his pocket, and expander they would be the papers which could throw a light upon the mode of conducting this dilatory war. Did not the disgraceful retreat from Holland excite inquiries, where we purchased our permission to depart by the surrender of 8000 troops? Did not the improper post pitched upon to attack Holland excite enquiry. Even after this ill-conducted expedition, the troops were given months at home, when his Royal Highness the Duke of York was required to get the troops in readiness for another expedition, did not his Royal