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From the ALEXANDRIA DAILY ADVERTISER.

THE observations of every day must serve to convince us, that objects of the most extensive public utility, and institutions calculated to promote the best interests of society, cannot escape opposition and censure, when local jealousy or individual interest can see or fancy it can see therein an operation unfavorable to its views and wishes.

The attempt made to aid and extend the commerce of the town of Alexandria, by the establishment of the Bank of Potomac, has drawn from a writer in the National Intelligencer of the 24 inst. some observations on what he calls the bank mania now prevailing, and much hostile animadversion upon the proposed establishment. He sets out with a quotation from Smith's Wealth of nations in which that intelligent writer states the origin, the operations and failure of the bank of Ayr, in Scotland, and displays the misconduct of the Company and the radical defects in the institution which produced their bankruptcy. If the writer had attended more closely to those observations, he would have found they were but little applicable to our proposed establishment: he would have found that the plan of the bank of Ayr was more similar to that of the proposed bank at Annapolis, that its money was let out upon landed security to farmers and projectors, and the loans made for a long time; and by perusing a little further the author from which he quotes, he would have been enabled to discover that it is from the operations of commerce alone, that banks can expect an efficient support, and that it is in aid of commerce that they can be rendered most useful, most profitable, and most safe.

"The coffers of the bank so far as its dealings are confined to such customers, (i. e. merchants) resemble a water pomp, from which though a stream, is constantly running out, yet another is continually running in, fully equal to that which runs out; so that without any further care or attention the pond keeps always equal, or nearly equally full. Little or no expense can never be necessary for replenishing the coffers of such a bank." Page 378, 1st vol. Phila. Ed.

But when a bank is conducted upon different principles, when the money is lent out upon mortgages and for a long time, Mr. Smith observes, "The stream which is in this case continually running out from its coffers is necessarily much larger than that which is continually running in, so that unless they are replenished by some great and continual effort of expence, those coffers must soon be exhausted altogether." Of this latter description was the bank of Ayr which failed, but not of this description will be the bank of Potomac; from the improvements in the agriculture of our western countries and from the opening of the river *Potomac*, a rich and extensive commerce will swell the stream flowing into it, while the stream flowing out will remunerate the benefit, and impart to commerce, in its turn, an additional extent and vigor.

The author of the aforesaid publication is not, however, singular in his fears of danger from the too great multiplication of banks; those fears were equally prevalent in Great Britain at the time of the publication of "The wealth of Nations"—Mr. Smith speaks thus upon the subject—"If banks are restrained from issuing any circulating bank notes, or notes payable to the bearer, for less than a certain sum, and if they are subjected to the obligation of an immediate and unconditional payment of such bank notes as soon as presented, their trade may with safety to the public be rendered in all other respects perfectly free. The late multiplication of banking companies in both parts of the United Kingdom, *an event by which many people have been much alarmed*, instead of diminishing, increases the security of the public. It obliges all of them to be more circumspect in their conduct, and by not extending their currency beyond its due proportion to their cash, to guard themselves against those malicious runs, which the rivalship of so many competitors is always ready to bring upon them." Here we have indeed important testimony in our favor, and with much pleasure do I adduce the opinions of this very intelligent author to quiet the fears of those who apprehend danger from the extension of the banking system in our country, in addition to which I must observe, that there appears to me to be one check which must ever operate to prevent its being carried to a dangerous extreme, which is, that whenever the profits are so lessened by the increased number of such establishments, as to reduce the price of stock to par, or less than par, then no new subscription can be filled. I cannot, therefore, see any reason to believe with the writer aforementioned, that the danger of the community is such as to require legislative interference to suppress our establishment, nor do I see any thing in the existing laws of Virginia, or of the United States, to excite alarm in the Stockholders. The opinion of the writer that Congress by pledging itself to the bank of the United States *not to establish* any other bank during the term of its charter, thereby is bound to suppress any banking association which may establish itself within the district, is an opinion which I conceive does not require refutation.

But should we even admit the propriety of legislative controul over bank establishments, and that it would be proper for the state governments to prohibit banks without charters, within their jurisdiction; yet when it is considered that in the district of Columbia there is no legislative authority competent to incorporate a banking company during the term for which the charter of the Bank of the United States is granted by congress, I am induced to think that the peculiarity of our situation claims peculiar indulgence, and that congress will be governed by a more just and liberal policy, than to oppose any obstacles to the operation of the proposed establishment. Nor is the time very distant, when we may calculate with confidence upon being able to obtain a charter; in the year 1811, the present charter of the bank of the United States will expire, when congress, in renewing it, will have regard no doubt to the situation of the district of Columbia, and will reserve the right of incorporating banks therein. With respect to the legislature of Virginia, I know of no inducement to operate upon it, to interfere in the business. Alexandria, once a part of their state, is still, and must ever be, the natural market for the produce of an extensive and fertile part of their territory, the citizens of which are too much interested in the commercial prosperity of the town, not to oppose their efforts to any measure, which might be brought forward in the legislature, to injure the circulation of the notes; nor can we readily believe, that the enlightened government of Virginia would descend to such a measure of persecution. It is true the legislature of New-York passed a law for the suppression of the Merchant's Bank, but that measure is known by every body, to have been the result of party animosity; but in our establishment, politics and party spirit hold no place; we disclaim all rivalship with the Bank of Virginia; we are solicitous that a branch of that institution be established in our suburbs, the profits of which will not be lessened one cent by the Bank of Potomac. When it is considered that the exports from the town of Alexandria, in the last year, amounted to 1.200,000 dolls. every man of information, on such subjects, must be convinced, that the commerce of the town will require the aid, and afford full employment for all the capital of both establishments: Nor can those who are interested in the Bank of Virginia, feel any doubt as to the full employment of their capital, or the extensive circulation of their notes, when they make a comparison of the exports of Virginia and Maryland, for the last year, and the bank capital employed respectively by those states. The report of the Treasury Department shews, that in the last year—

Domestic Produce and Manufactures.

Virginia exported,	7,229 967
Maryland exported,	3,838,396
Difference,	3 391 571

Thus, while the exports of domestic growth and manufacture, are nearly double from Virginia what they are from Maryland, it will be found that the bank capital of the city of Baltimore alone, is about double the amount of the bank capital of Virginia, including the bank of Alexandria and the bank of Potomac. Under those circumstances can the bank of Virginia entertain any fears for the extent of her circulation or the employment of her capital? or can her friends be persuaded to feel the smallest jealousy towards our proposed establishment, possessing only a capital of half a million? No assuredly; Common sense forbids it.

But it is alledged that a law of Virginia exists, imposing a penalty upon the passage of private bank bills, payable to bearer. Previous to the passage of this law, it had become a practice with merchants and shop-keepers, to issue such notes to an extent productive of much fraud; very many also of such notes, issued by Robert Morris, were in circulation in the state; it was to counteract the evils apprehended from this system that the aforesaid law was passed. But I presume that it cannot be reasonably contended, that an individual or company, issuing notes *payable to order*, would be amenable to the penalties of this law; certainly not—and, in this opinion, the ablest lawyers amongst us have concurred. In opposition therefore to the opinion of the writer on this subject, I must still believe, that the bank notes made payable to the order of the Teller, or any other officer of the bank, will neither infringe the spirit nor the letter of the law.

When the writer roundly asserts that the plan of the bank of Potomac is quite a novelty, that it is *sui generis*, &c. I must tell him he is mistaken; when he tells us that *he* has heard of no bank established without a charter in expectation at least, he may be correct—but if he would extend his enquiries upon the subject, he *might hear* that of all the numerous banks of Great-Britain, only one in England and two in Scotland are incorporated, and that in our own country to the northward and eastward of us, there are many banks which conduct their business successfully without charters. Indeed a charter can be considered as of little value to a banking company, except as a guarantee from government that its operations shall not be impeded; and in our case I trust we have nothing to fear on that score. The anxiety already manifested by the monied men of the northern towns, to possess themselves of stock in the bank of Potomac, must be considered as a pleasing testimonial from those best acquainted with the banking system, of their approbation of the plan and prospects of what our writer is pleased to call "this singularly constituted bank." And notwithstanding the dangerous position in which he has placed it "between Scylla and Charybdis," its friends with confidence anticipate for it a safe and prosperous voyage, profitable to all concerned and beneficial to the community.

MERCATOR.

From the ENQUIRER.

VINDICATION of VIRGINIA.

No. IV.

CONSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF SLAVES.

The constitution, the laws, or the administration of our government embrace few questions, more interesting in their consequences, and none more curious and difficult in their nature than the one which is here presented to our consideration. It appears to be one of those cases in the theory of representative government, on which politicians have not sufficiently reflected; on which the experience of nations has yet had no opportunity of deciding. Go back to the history of ancient times and examine the constitutions of those countries, which were denominated free; you will find that they partook of the democratic and not the republican form; that the people instead of employing representatives to manage their political affairs, were themselves accustomed to guide the helm of government by means of General Assemblies. Come down to modern times, and survey the situation of existing nations, you will discover that the British constitution, the very freest which Europe has to boast of, is eminently defective in the election of its representative department; and that for the purpose of proving how unequal was the representation in the different parts of the empire, some authors have asserted that of the 558 members, which composed the British House of Commons, one ninth was elected by 364 persons, and one half by 5728 persons.* Examine the state constitutions of our own country, you will discover no analogous illustration. The states, which contained very few slaves, would have scarcely regarded it as worthy their attention to have calculated the number of black inhabitants, when they were about to adjust the number of representatives which should come from different districts or counties; and in those states, where this race of men has principally existed, the boundaries of the districts and counties, which obtained an equal number of representatives, have been arranged by the population or convenience of the whites, and not by the number of their tawny inhabitants. It was not until the important æra arrived, when a general government was proposed for the American states; when a constitution was demanded, whose provisions should be equally adapted to the situation of those states which had slaves, and those that had none, that the important question was suggested, whether the Southern States should be represented in the simple ratio of the number of their white people, or whether they should derive any additional influence from their black inhabitants? This great question was suggested at a time when all the various provisions of a complicated system of government were about to be discussed, and when the public mind was thus expanded over such a variety of subjects, that the present question did not probably meet the satisfactory investigation to which its immense importance so justly entitled it. Since the adoption of the constitution, other topics have almost compleatly engrossed the public attention; and it has only been within the period of the few last months that the federal editors of the north have introduced it once more to the notice of the public. This subject at length assumes a form more official and more imposing. Mr. Ely, a member of the Massachusetts legislature has brought forward a series of resolutions, whose professed object is to obtain an amendment to the Federal Constitution. Without any experimental chart then, to direct us in this unknown quarter of political science; with scarce a single calculation of an experienced navigator to assist our progress, it will not be wonderful if this progress should be tedious, desultory and uncertain. With all these difficulties then, amply spread before me, I should eminently mistake my own powers of the difficulty of the undertaking, should I adventurously soar to any higher investigation of a few only of those points, with which this question abounds. These points will be found to relate to the principal arguments of Mr. Ely.

The scheme of our federal constitution is admirable and peculiar. Its influence extends only to general subjects; whilst it reserves every local concern to the more accurate superintendance of the state sovereignties. Whilst it exercises the power of operating upon individuals in *general* matters, it reserves to the states the inestimable and sacred power of operating upon individuals in all *local* concerns. As each of these powers is equally necessary to the proper defence and general accommodation of the society, no provisions should have been omitted to guard the weaker against the stronger power; to protect the state sovereignties against the progressive encroachments of the federal government. That constitution however, would have obtained no effectual provision of this sort, which simply designated the general powers of that which should devolve upon the federal government, without allowing at the same time to the states, some particular control over the federal head, in the exercise of those powers. It is from this cause that we discover in the present constitution so many express privileges conferred on the state sovereignties. Each state has an equal influence in the federal senate. In the election of President, the votes of the states are not proportionate to the numbers or wealth of each state, but they are fixed in a compound ratio of their influence in the senate, and their influence in the house of representatives. Even in the election of members in the house of representatives, the distinction of states is to a certain degree preserved. A member of this body is not chosen for every 33,000 inhabitants that are in the United States, but for every 33,000 that are in each state; so jealous is the constitution of any tendency in the federal head to verge towards a consolidated government. No prudent politician will object to this jealous spirit in the constitution. Perhaps no one will deny that there ought to have been some particular body, in which all the states should have enjoyed an *equal* influence for the preservation of the state sovereignties. Few then will be prepared to object to that peculiar structure of the federal senate, by which all the states whether large or small, whether it be Virginia or Delaware, are reduced to the same level of political importance. So far then then the *federal* principle of our government appears to have been vigilantly guarded. This was *one* of the great objects which the constitution was intended to accomplish. There was another equally important, to which it should have aspired.

The states were not only entitled to all those constitutional provisions which might have preserved their independent sovereignties, but they were entitled to that relative influence in the administration of the government, which their different degrees of political importance would have conferred upon them. Delaware and Virginia were each of them entitled to a constitution which should reflect their sovereignty; but Virginia might have equitably claimed a share in the administration of the government as much greater than that of Delaware, as its own political importance was really superior. To carry this principle into practice, it would not have been sufficient that these states should have an influence in the lower house proportional to their real importance; that Virginia should have had 22 members (for instance) and Delaware only one; but that her representation in the senate and her election for the President should have been in the same proportions. Should the larger states however have waved this privilege in the formation of the federal constitution; should they have permitted the small states to possess an equal voice in the senate; it will certainly follow that they have relinquished a right to which they were equitably entitled. The constitution has wisely perhaps sacrificed this equitable claim to the general interests of the union. On the floor of the senate, a large state, such as Massachusetts, has no more influence than a small state, as Delaware.—But should we apply this equitable maxim, not to one or two, but to a combination of the states, we shall easily discover that the Eastern states, or those which have no slaves, have a decided preponderance over the Southern states, which contain the greatest number. The four Eastern states, New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Vermont, are entitled by the last census to 35 representatives only; while the five southern states, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina and Georgia, are entitled, agreeably to the representative role of the constitution, to 55 representatives. On the floor of the senate however, the five Eastern states have an equal influence with the five southern states. We thus arrive at the obvious conclusion, that the Eastern states have gained, and the southern states have lost a considerable influence by the present constitution of the Senate; and consequently that the Eastern states have begun to recover by their equal vote in the upper house, that political importance, which they had lost in the lower house for the want of a negro representation. Two additional considerations will demonstrate the extraordinary value of this senatorial influence.—1st. The constitution has conferred much more extensive powers upon the senate than upon the house of representatives. They not only possess all the legislative powers, except the power of originating money bills, but they exercise also some of the executive functions, since they ratify the appointment of officers and the regulations of treaties; and they also exercise some of the judicial functions, since they have the power to try all impeachments. 2d. The negro states are destined by the intrinsic structure of our society, to advance much faster in wealth, population and importance, than the Eastern states. The greater extent and fertility of their soil, and their genial climate, will be almost inexhaustible sources of population and treasure. The eastern states exclusive of Rhode-Island, contain about 43 365 square miles, while the southern states, exclusive of Georgia, contain not less than 133,000 square miles. On this basis, it would be easy to calculate how many more inhabitants the southern states are destined to produce in a few revolving years, than the eastern states. Having assigned such a proportion of this population to our tawny brethren, let it be half, it would not require much mathematical acumen to demonstrate that, at no distant period, the southern or slave states will be able to produce a much larger census of *free persons only* than the eastern states. Notwithstanding this increasing importance their relative influence in the federal senate still continues unaltered; and thus the constitution has conferred upon the eastern states an equal influence in one of the most important departments of the government, while their real importance, there well would even the number of their freemen would be every day becoming less and less.

Who can compare these various facts together; who can balance the negro representation of the southern states, and the increasing number of *their* free