

CONNECTICUT COURANT.

V OL. LVII.....NO. 2940.]

HARTFORD.....TUESDAY, MAY 23, 1821.

[2 Dollars per annum payable in advance.]

HEAR BOTH SIDES

From the Bridgeport Courier, May 23.

We can hardly find terms, sufficiently to contemn [sic] the disgraceful exhibition that was witnessed in this borough on Thursday evening last; an exhibition, which, of all others, is more surely calculated to excite the worst feelings and gratify the most vicious propensities of the human heart; and while we have the pleasure to affirm that no citizen among us of any consideration was instrumental, in its procurement, we can state with equal confidence, that as it was sudden and unexpected, as its perpetuation was sincerely discountenanced and condemned. It is true, that it was by a few individuals unadvisedly proposed, on the morning of that day, to exhibit some *approbationary* [author's italics] demonstration of the public feeling, (at the recent unparalleled [sic], unheard of, and *unconstitutional* act of our state legislature, in the erection of a new town within the limits of the town of Stratford, and that too, contrary to the earnest wish, and humble remonstrance of a large majority of the inhabitants;) which, however, met the most decided disapprobation of every reflecting judicious man in the community; of course the plan was dropped, and as was generally supposed put entirely at rest. But how great was the surprize [sic] and astonishment of our citizens, when at about 9 o'clock in the evening, their ears were stunned by the discharge of cannon [sic], and their eyes bedazzled by the flaming effigys [sic] of two of our most *distinguished* fellow-citizens, judge Plant and judge Fairchild, elevated on poles, and placed on the opposite side of the channel, and directly in front of our wharves. This scene though sudden and unexpected, and located as it was could not be prevented; and our citizens, while they witnessed the aspiring flames, could only contemplate with wonder and amazement that gigantic influence of their *aliment* [sic], which could induce a legislature

to violate the rights of a community, and turn them as outcasts on the world, without law and without protection.

*From the Bridgeport Republican Farmer
May 23*

Mr. Printer,

There is no man more ardently attached to republican principles than I am, nor any man who will risk more in their defence [sic]; but I should be unworthy of the name of republican if I should lamely sit still and see those principles torn up root and branch. Be assured I take no pleasure in exposing men with whom I have long acted; by whose sides I have fought many hard battles; and won what I then thought and still think, glorious victories. But my friendship to individuals will not suffer me to see the people's rights bleed at every pore. If we are betrayed by our friends, then let us know it: he that can do that, is no republican—he only has a name to live while he is dead to republicanism.

These remarks have been wrung from me by the late division of the town of Stratford: a most extraordinary and unprecedented affair in the reformed state of Connecticut! The facts are these:—A few individuals, in the eastern section of the town, got up a petition (what their object was I do not *now* say,) but they got up a petition requesting the Legislature to put away Bridgeport from the town of Stratford. What! one side of a town requesting the legislature to strip the other side of its dearest rights! Impossible: so impudent a claim could not have been made in the State of Connecticut, at the present day, some of your distant readers will exclaim; but it was exactly so. Nobody thought so absurd a claim could be granted, even if no opposition was made; however, a regular town meeting was called; a large decided vote of the town, yes, of the town of Stratford was taken against a division. Surely now these petitioners will give up all hopes of success. No such thing—the petition goes on. Then,

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over and above an almost unanimous -vote of the town against a division, a remonstrance was signed by more than *three hundred* people, all inhabitants of the town the town of Stratford, and a great many more people remonstrated against the petition than petitioned for it, besides the vote of the town; and what is more remarkable, not a single individual within the limits of the new proposed town signed the petition; all, with one voice protested against it. No matter for that, the petition must go on; if fair play will not do, foul play must. Intrigue will accomplish wonders. The petition is granted.

Mr. Printer as you have been a long and tried friend of the republican cause, I feel a confidence in your patriotism; may it not be disappointed. If the people's rights are to be thus wrested from them, (from what motives I do not say *now*) but if the people's rights are to be thus wrested from them in the state of Connecticut, under Constitution, then we are free in name more than in substance. JEFFERSON.

BRIDGEPORT, June 13

On Monday last, agreeably to resolve of the late legislature, the freemen of this town assembled in the Rev. Mr. Waterman's Church, and organized themselves by choosing the following gentlemen to their respective offices, to wit:

Selectmen—James E. Beach, Noah Plumb, Reuben Tweedy, Wilson Hawley, Enoch Foote, Joseph Knapp, David Nichols, jun.

Town Clerk—Salmon Hubbell.

Town Treasurer—Smith Tweedy.

Constables—Ezra Gregory, jun., Robert Gregory, Henry Judson, Benjamin S. Smith, Matthew Curtis.

When the following votes were read and adopted *unanimously*:—

Voted—That whereas this meeting is convened in pursuance of a resolve of the General Assembly at their session in May 1821, by which we are *commanded* [author's italics] this day to meet and organize ourselves as a town, according to the laws of this state; and whereas our so doing may be construed into a willing acquiescence in the condition in which we are by said resolve placed; which to prevent, and to make known to our fellow citizens throughout this state, the light in which we view the whole transaction, which has resulted in a necessity of submitting to the strong hand of power however exercised. We do most solemnly protest against said resolve for the reasons following, to wit: -

1. Because said Resolve is in our opinion most palpably unconstitutional and unjust, in that by it, a *majority* of the inhabitants of the town of Stratford living in a particular section thereof are wholly disfranchised and deprived of all their rights as citizens of that town against their will, and at the instigation of a *minority* of said inhabitants living in another section thereof; and in that, said majority are deprived of the privilege of sending two representatives to the General Assembly, without their consent or

agreement, by the vote of said minority, only at a meeting in which said majority were forbidden to act, a right expressly guaranteed in any town from which any new town is made, by the constitution of the state; and in that said majority are by said Resolves, deprived of their lawful name as a town, and have another imposed upon them all without their consent; and in that, they are in like manner deprived of their town records, which with the name are given to such the minority.

2. And because the line of division is unequal and unjust, in that it leaves to said majority not more than one fourth part of the actual territory of said town; and in that said division line runs three-fourths of its distance, through enclosed farms, by which the owners of them, being a part of said majority, will become taxable for town expenses in the town composed of said minority, all which might have been prevented by adopting a certain highway and brook called Kneesandpaws Creek, or at some other place as a line of division; and in that there is left to said majority a breadth of boundary on the sea of not more than sixty rods, while said minority possess a boundary as they state in their petition for said resolve, of about five miles on the sea, and ten miles on the Ousatonic river; and in that said resolve gives to said minority the controul [sic] of one half of Bridgeport harbour [sic] for all purposes but quarantine, which may prove an intolerable vexation to said majority; whereas, if a line had been run in said highway and creek, &c. nearly all the evils mentioned would have been obviated.

3. And because in case of a disagreement as to a division of the property and burdens, a great proportion of which consists of bridges, three fourths of which are in the west division of said town of Stratford, the dispute must be finally determined without appeal, by a single individual, whom indeed the majority highly respect, but who was

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nominated and his appointment procured by the minority without the knowledge or consent of the majority.

4. And because said Resolve will be a precedent for the violation of all other rights of all the citizens of this state.

5. And because said majority are impressed with a belief that said resolve was procured a passage through said assembly by information given to its members which was altogether incorrect, and by which they were deceived into a belief of its propriety without due enquiry before the houses.

Wherefore, for the reasons afore-stated, and many others apparent from their said resolve, this meeting do most solemnly protest against said resolve; that it is unconstitutional, arbitrary and unjust; and do hereby declare, that whatever shall be done at this meeting or at any future meeting in carrying into effect said resolve, is submission to the strong hand of power, reserving to ourselves notwithstanding, what may be so done, the right at any future time, to seek redress by all lawful ways and means whatsoever.

Voted—That the Foregoing be entered as the first article in the records of said Town of Bridgeport, and that the Printers of this town be requested to publish the same in their respective papers. Dated this 11th day of June, 1821.

ENOCH FOOT, *Moderator.*

True copy, certified by

SALMON HUBBELL, *Clerk.*