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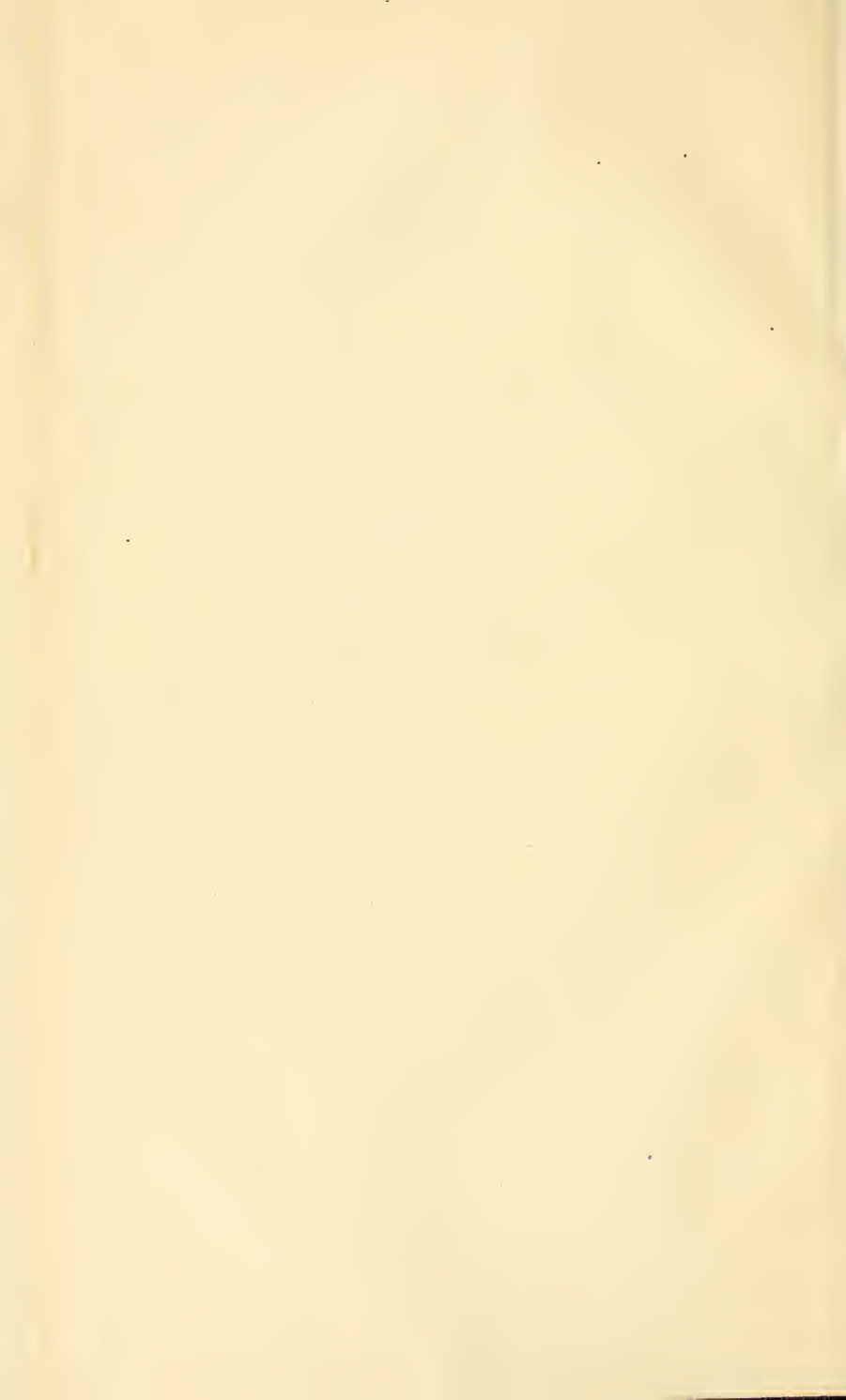
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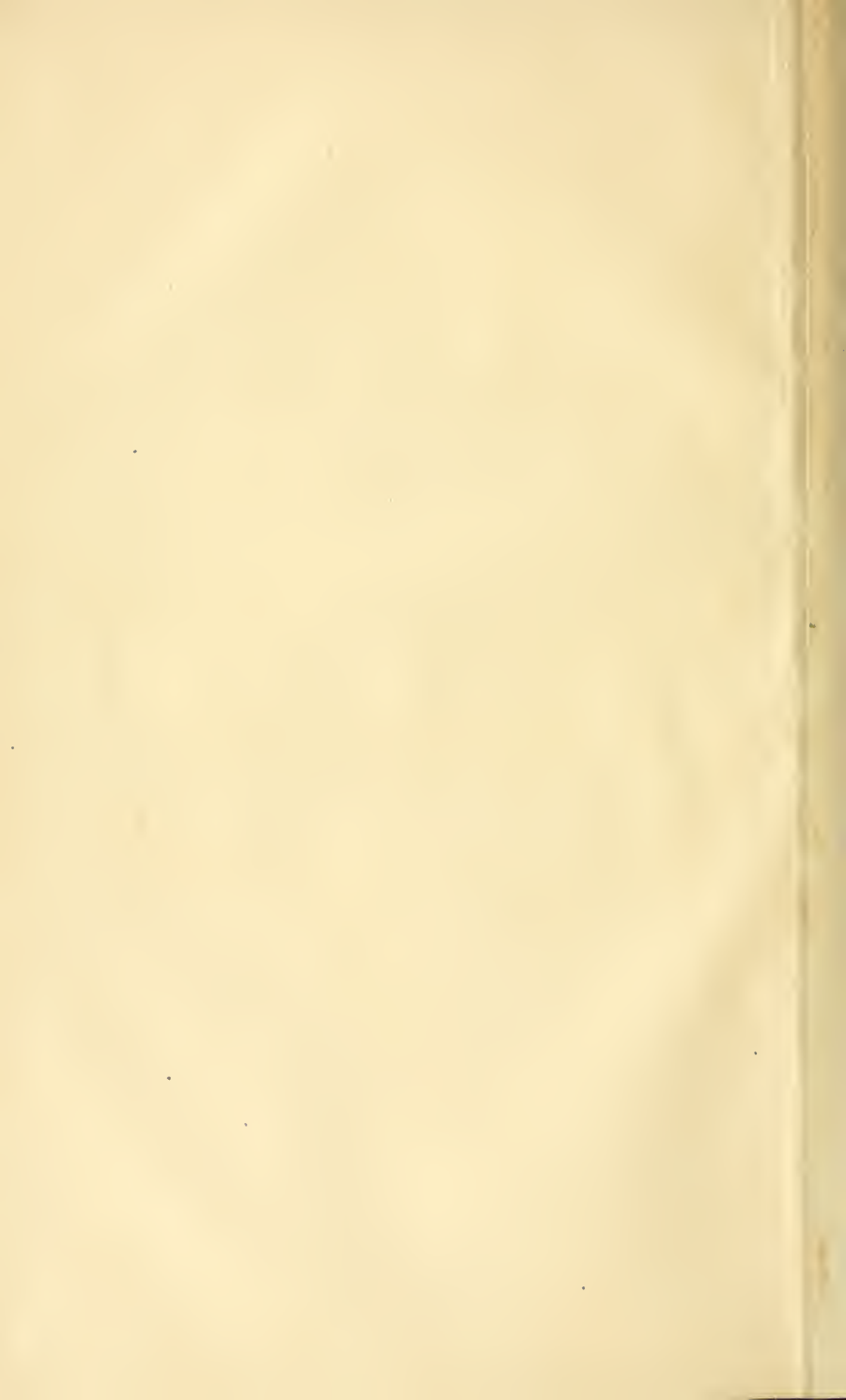
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PROCEEDINGS
AND
ADDRESS OF THE CONVENTION
OF
DELEGATES,
TO THE
PEOPLE OF NEW-JERSEY.

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PROCEEDINGS of a Convention of Delegates of the People of New-Jersey, chosen in the several Counties of said State, and held by public appointment at the City of Trenton, on the 4th day of July, 1812.

The Delegates being assembled at 10 o'clock, proceeded to the nomination and choice of a Chairman and Secretary, and did unanimously appoint JONATHAN ELMER, of Cumberland, *Chairman*, and JOHN OUTWATER, of Bergen, *Secretary*.

On motion, *Ordered*, That the names of the Delegates present be inserted on the minutes as follows:—

BERGEN COUNTY.

John Outwater,
Jacob Terheun.

ESSEX.

Aaron Ogden,
Jeremiah Ballard,
Elias B. Dayton.

MIDDLESEX.

James Schureman,
Erkuries Beatty,
Thomas Mc Dowell,
John Poole.

SOMERSET.

Richard Stockton,
John D. W. Tenbrook,
Elbert Stootoff,
Gilbert B. Taylor,
John Wyckoff.

MORRIS.

John Kinney,
John G. Cooper.

MONMOUTH.

Elias Conover,
Thomas Henderson,
James H. Imlay,
David Craig,
John Stillwell,
William Lloyd,
William Lawrie,
James Lloyd.

HUNTERDON.

Aaron D. Woodruff,
William Potts,
Charles Ewing,
John Scudder,
John Corvell.

William S. Moore,
Joseph Phillips,
John Stevens,
James Stevenson,
William Maxwell,
John E. Forman,
John Carpenter,
Ira Jewell,
James White.

BURLINGTON.

John Black,
William Griffith,
William Cox,
George Anderson,
William Irick,
Charles Ellis,
Richard Cox,
Samuel J. Read,
Edward French,
William Pearson,
Joseph Bolton.

GLOUCESTER.

Franklin Davenport,
Joshua L. Howell,
Charles French,
Samuel W. Harrison,
Samuel L. Howell,
Samuel P. Paul,
Joseph V. Clark,
John Pissant,
James Batten,
Daniel Carrell.

SALEM.

Thomas Sinnickson,
Robert G. Johnson.

CUMBERLAND.

Jonathan Elmer,
James Giles,
Jeremiah Buck,
Joel Fithian,

Samuel M. Shute,
William B. Ewing,
Jonathan Dollas.

On motion, it was *Resolved*, That this Convention will proceed to consider the alarming state of public affairs—and particularly on the means to be used for constitutionally and speedily relieving the country from the grievances of *War*.

Whereupon, after full debate on the principles and measures proper to be adopted at this time, for the foregoing purposes, it was, on motion, *Ordered*, That a Committee be appointed of eleven members, (each county delegation naming one) to draft an Address to the People of New-Jersey, in conformity to the instructions of this Convention, and that they report thereon at five o'clock in the afternoon.

Whereupon, the following delegates were chosen for said Committee:—

For *Bergen*,
John Outwater.
Essex,
Aaron Ogden.
Middlesex,
James Schureman.
Somerset,
Richard Stockton.
Monmouth,
Thomas Henderson.
Hunterdon,
Aaron D. Woodruff.

Morris,
John G. Cooper.
Burlington,
William Griffith.
Gloucester,
Samuel W. Harrison.
Salem,
Thomas Sinnickson,
Cumberland,
William B. Ewing.

The Convention adjourned to meet again at 5 o'clock in the afternoon; and being assembled at said hour, present as before, the Committee, by THOMAS HENDERSON, their Chairman, made report to the Convention of the draft of an Address to the People of New-Jersey, as had been ordered, which, being read, debated, and amended, on the question whether this Convention doth agree to the same, it was *unanimously* determined in the *affirmative*; and it was further resolved, that the same be signed by the Chairman and Secretary, on behalf of this Convention, that it be published in the papers of this State, and in one of the papers of the cities of Philadelphia and New-York, and that three thousand copies thereof be printed in a pamphlet form, and distributed among the several counties of this State, in such manner as may be deemed expedient by Messrs. Charles Ewing, Garret D. Wall and William Potts, who are appointed a Committee for that purpose.

The Convention, after full consideration, did come to the following

First.—As the attainment of *Peace*, by a *change of Men* now in the administration, or some of them, is of such vast moment to the People of New-Jersey, this Convention, on that account doth recommend to the Friends of Peace in each county to convene at some suitable time and place, and appoint *two Delegates* to meet other Delegates on *Tuesday the 11th day of August next* at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, at *Trenton*, for the purpose of agreeing on fit persons to be nominated as *Electors* of President and Vice-President, and as *members of Congress* for this State, to be chosen at the ensuing fall election; and it is further recommended to the several counties, as well in the appointment of the above Delegates as in the nomination of members of Council and Assembly for the State Legislature, that they endeavour to select persons who will use all constitutional means to obtain a *Repeal* of the *War Bill*, passed in Congress on the eighteenth of June, and who will promote the settlement of any differences with Great-Britain on honorable terms, by *Negotiation*—and oppose all alliance with France.

Secondly.—And it is further agreed upon and resolved, by this Convention, that a *Committee of Correspondence* be appointed to communicate with like Committees who may be appointed in other States, for the purpose of agreeing on candidates for the offices of President and Vice-President, and all other matters which may be of importance to the Peace, Union and Liberties of the United States: which *Committee* was accordingly appointed.

The Address of this Convention as above agreed to is directed to be inserted on the minutes, and is as follows:

[SEE NEXT PAGE.]

ADDRESS
OF THE
CONVENTION
TO THE
PEOPLE OF NEW-JERSEY.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

A CRISIS has at length arrived in the *Administration* of the public affairs of this country, in which every one of us has a deep and solemn concern. It is not our purpose to review the various acts and proceedings of those to whom the People for twelve years past have entrusted the management of these affairs! Unhappily they seem to have left us little to reflect upon but our divisions and misfortunes. Most unequivocally, however, do we declare our confidence in the *great body of citizens*, whatever may have been our distrust or dissatisfaction in regard to many *men in office*, and the measures they have pursued.

We believe the PEOPLE, to whatever set of men or measures they have attached their confidence and support, could only mean, and did mean, the good, the peace, and prosperity of a country, rendered dear to them by so many privileges and blessings. It is to this PEOPLE, so enlightened, so independent and patriotic, (and may we trust, so candid as to confide in our sincerity) that we now address ourselves.

On the 18th of June, a small majority in Congress did by a LAW declare WAR on the part of the United States, against the United Kingdom of Great-Britain and Ireland and its dependencies.

This *act*, so unexpected, so opposed to the petitions and remonstrances of every class and part of the community—so steadfastly and honorably resisted by a great majority of the

delegates in Congress from *this* State, and by those of many other States, could *not be prevented*. It was, after many days struggle, in *secret* sittings, carried through and has become a *Law*.

This CONVENTION is composed of men, who would ill deserve the confidence of their fellow-citizens, and dishonor their own principles, were they to attempt to obstruct or defeat this law, by any irregular opposition—by violence, by menace, or illegal combinations. It must be for those who want a good cause, and distrust the *force of reason*, to support it, to adopt means so unworthy of freemen and good citizens. Some of us have contributed early and ardently, in contending for and laying the foundations of civil liberty, and all of us are too deeply impressed with the duties of submission to constitutional laws (*while they are in force*) to be capable of conduct or advice, tending to prevent their execution, by the agency of popular passions—however such laws may, during their continuance, distress the people or counteract their best and most important interests. But while we feel the obligation of our duties under a law which is deemed most impolitic and oppressive, we also know the extent of our *rights* and those of the people, enabling us and them to bring about its REPEAL, by our ELECTIONS.

We address you then, fellow-citizens, at this awful crisis, produced by the *war law*, in the language of freemen and free agents—in the consciousness of pure motives, and penetrated by the profoundest feelings of patriotic regard for our dear country. Our hearts and minds are filled with this *one* subject, and the prospect it opens (if the voice of the people does not save us) of lengthened, public miseries. We will not mingle in its consideration other grievances, or any matter calculated to embitter or revive party differences on *other* questions—all are lost, consummated, united, in the last great grievance of WAR.

Little did we, individually, or those who have confided this high trust to us in our character of Delegates of the People, imagine, that a majority, however *small*, of the persons in office, could be brought to plunge this country into a War, and to unite, as probably it must, our destinies, and certainly our efforts, in a common cause with the tyrant of France.

By some fatality, incomprehensible to us, on any principles of prudence, and much less of necessity, has this happened. A law, debated and passed in *secret*, has placed this

extensive country and all its great interests of peace—commerce—agriculture—union—and future prosperity, on the *fate* of War.

Defence, within our own borders, and even arming our vessels for *defence*, on the seas, against both French and English aggression, was a practicable and not a hazardous expedient. But without preparation, and without trial of the means of *defence*, dissension in our country, and general opposition to war, to become the *attacking* power, and to declare open, general and offensive War, against one of the great contending states of Europe—we repeat it fellow-citizens, is an event in the history, even of these times, which fills us, and we believe the great body of the people, with grief and amazement.

We were not invaded—no power even threatened it; we still enjoyed a tenfold greater portion of internal and even external happiness and prosperity than any nation in the world. Our *agriculture, commerce and manufactures*, the great products of our fields, forests and fisheries, growing out of the industry and enterprize of seven millions of free and virtuous citizens, were yet but *little* impaired, except by our *own* internal restrictions, which could at any time be suspended or removed.

In regard even to trade and navigation on the *Ocean*, an immense and sufficient scope remained for all our ships, seamen and capital, free from belligerent and temporary restraints. The *British* orders in council (made the principal ground of the war) only put *France, Holland, and a part of Italy*, in a state of blockade, preventing our merchant ships going there. The *whole* world beside, was, in regard to any conduct of the British, as free to us as before. China, the East and West Indies, South America, Great-Britain and her dependencies, and all the States and Kingdoms in Europe; none of all this vast portion of the world was affected or shut against us by the British orders in council; nine tenths, at least, of all our trade, was free. *France only*, and her dependencies of Holland and part of Italy were blockaded, with whom, if no blockade of their ports existed, our trade could be worth very little, subject as it was to every species of vexation, loss, plunder and prohibitory duties.

Our own coasting trade of 1500 miles in extent, serving to employ and to support so many of our fellow-citizens, and to transport with ease and economy the surplus productions

of labour from one state to the other by sea, affording a real profit to the community equal to the whole of our foreign trade—all this too remained to us unaffected by belligerent edicts.

Our *revenue* from commerce, also was very great, equal, annually, to the payment of every expense of the navy, army, civil list, and other demands of government, beside discharging, each year, a portion of the old debt of the revolution. The average of this revenue, not less than twelve millions of dollars, annually, relieving the people from any direct taxes payable to the United States. In these favoured circumstances of agriculture, foreign navigation, coasting trade and revenue, was *war* declared, and it necessarily shakes them to the foundation.

In regard to our political, moral, civil and religious blessings and advantages, they were surely great and many. *Peace* itself, and *Neutrality*, at a time when all the European world is convulsed and tending by wars and famine, to dissolution and the tyranny of one man, were to *us*, who almost solely enjoyed them, inestimable blessings. How innumerable and vast they were, your own feelings, enjoyments, and reflections, fellow-citizens, can better determine than we describe. In great mercy also, we were removed 3000 miles from those scenes of violence and devastation—we had taken no part in them. Our pure and free and progressing country, had kept itself from the dangerous and deadly grasp of French connection. This was our fear and our *danger*.

This war, if it is to be continued, deprives us of neutrality and peace—It makes this wide ocean no longer a barrier between America and the ambition and ruthless vengeance, which are scourging Europe—destroying republics—liberty and human happiness. We are brought, by it to touch the confines of a land steeped with blood, oppression and crimes. In a word, it brings to the people of these states, with all the rest of its actual and prospective evils, a co-operation in the war, if not a general alliance, with France against England. With what anxious forebodings must every heart be torn, that thinks upon a war which not only cuts us off from so many positive blessings, but launches this safe and happy people into the vortex of European broils—into wars, which twenty years of blood and devastation, have but served to infuriate, extend and perpetuate.

That our country had received wrongs, both in its honor and rights, from England, during her long contest with France, need not be disputed. What peaceable and neutral power has not ;—and which of those injured powers, embarking in a war or alliance with France, or alone, to vindicate those rights, that has not suffered injuries ten fold greater? Most of them indeed losing their very liberties and independence in attempting to establish minor pretensions and vindicate what was called their *honor*. That Great-Britain is wrong in preventing our trade with France, because France interdicted our trade with England ; or that her cruisers on the ocean frequently have impressed American seamen, pretending they were British subjects, or under real mistakes of the fact, are wrongs ;—and that of impressment, a most injurious practice, and justly calculated to kindle our resentments, and to claim from our government *prudent* and persevering means to prevent or mitigate its severity, either by arming merchant ships for defence, or agreeing with England on some plan of avoiding the mistakes or violence of her sea officers. Such a plan was indeed agreed to by England and approved of by our Ambassadors Pinkney and Monroe, but rejected by the American Cabinet.

Fellow-Citizens, wrongs to our country will never be vindicated by us—and even these, so much insisted upon, cannot be reviewed by us with feelings less acute to their *real* importance, than by others. *Washington*, *Jefferson* and *Adams*, during twenty years of administration, never considered the pretension, or practice of impressment, though more rigorously enforced then, as sufficiently justifying them to go to war. And now, that our administration, in the present state of the world, and circumstanced as it is, unprepared, and with divided councils, should by a *bare* majority declare general and offensive war, by land and sea, on such points not vitally affecting us in our *national* prosperity—instead of waiting for time, mutual interests and negotiation to settle them (many of which must end of themselves with the war in Europe)—is an event which seems to almost defy belief. The people—reflecting citizens are struck with amazement and disapprobation, looking round for means of relief from the threatened evils of a protracted, hazardous, and untimely war. A war declared against England too in the midst of Negotiations and whilst her ministry and Parliament were actually deliberating on the very point of repealing the

It is then, countrymen and friends, to this great, unlooked for and portentous *question* of WAR, we claim your solemn and candid attention. We have reflected upon it.—Our imaginations have carried us over its long and desolating track; desolate and long, even beyond imagination, will it prove;—if we do not *cut it short*, before its corruptions, its passions and violence, shall have fixed it upon our land beyond remedy or controul. It is in its *beginnings* we must make our lawful stand; before it spreads and strikes deep its roots. If long permitted to flourish over peace and social habits, all history proves that war becomes the *predominant* passion, and civil liberty too often yields up its blessings, to the lust of military ambition, pride and oppression.

We perceive this measure of the administration, big with unutterable mischiefs.—If PERSISTED in, when will it end? What is it to *gain* for us? Are we sure, or is there even a shadow of possibility, that we shall conquer England—compelling her by force of arms, to yield what she maintains to be her right, and refuses absolutely to relinquish in any other way than by agreement and mutual concessions? If war is resorted to, and while the war *law* continues, no further room is left for treaty; we must *force* our demands, and succeed in them by the *sword*—by bringing our enemy to submission.

And shall we, fellow-citizens, at this time, and in our circumstances, on account of these disputable points of trade with France and abuse of impressment, incur so many *immediate* losses and subject ourselves to so many certain *future* evils as this war must produce? You have seen what this immediate and certain loss will be in our *agriculture*, foreign and coasting *trade, revenue*, and internal blessings of *peace* and *neutrality*; losses, any one of them a hundred fold more to our injury than all that has accrued or can accrue from the occasional injuries we complain of at sea. If we go to war for commerce and seamen, is it not evident that we sacrifice them *both* and *entirely*? But what we must lose and suffer in the *outset*, great as it is, sinks into nothing compared with what will *follow*. Surely these dreadful consequences have escaped the notice of the advocates of war in their full extent— or they have preferred to encounter them rather than forego their resentments and retract from imprudent resolutions. How unfortunate when men prefer the honor of *persevering* in error, to the honor of retracting it; and when their coun-

try too is at stake. Beside the decay of agriculture, commerce and revenue, war will vitiate the morals of our people, particularly the rising generation. Is it nothing to bring on a general decline of virtue, order and regard for life, property, and private rights? Will not war necessarily produce this; with a decline also of industry and the evils of a wide spreading insolvency? Perhaps even all these might by some, be viewed without alarm; but what will the people say to, or how endure for a great length of time, other necessary concomitants of a state of war? In a contest, such as we must go through, with such a power, to *force* it into submission, **STANDING ARMIES**, the bane and destroyers of liberty in every country, must be introduced, continued and swelled to a dangerous magnitude. No matter what we call them, volunteers, select corps, &c. if they are *not* militia, under our own state officers and government, they are standing troops in the pay and under the direction of military chiefs, who may become ambitious, insolent, and over whom we can have little controul. In the train of war also follows, *wastefulness* and insatiable *demands* upon the peoples labor and substance, to support its never ceasing and growing expenses. Great armies must be raised, clothed, equipped and paid—and this, year after year, in addition to the ordinary expense of government and the support of the militia establishment. It is computed the additional war expense will not be short of 12 millions *annually*; how many years of war is uncertain. The burthens on every man in the country will increase *four* fold under war taxes, levied on his land and occupation, whilst his capacity to pay is diminished in the same proportion by the privations of war. Those so eager to make, or encourage the war, will share fewest of its dangers or burthens; they will fall on these eastern states, on their capital, industry and citizens. Is it possible for the reflecting citizen to look even on this consequence alone, and its magnitude, we mean taxes, personal services and loss of business, and not shudder with apprehension. *Public credit*, or a capacity to borrow, will, in all likelihood, ensue, particularly if the war is unsuccessful; and *paper money* follow: we believe this must be resorted to.—The old debt will remain unpaid, and a new one of vast extent be incurred. And is it nothing—or is it the most awful of all, that torrents of *blood* must flow and private distresses of all kinds be multiplied in this unnatural and disastrous contest.—Where too are our

experienced captains, and what *Washington* is left to inspire and conduct us?

We enquire also, when all our preparations shall be complete, if they ever can be, what are we to *gain* by war in any degree adequate to the evils it brings upon ourselves? Where shall we *strike* for the redress we seek on account of the orders in council and impressment? The British *navy* is out of our reach, and superior to our own. Her *armies* do not invade us, no triumph over them can then, probably, be obtained. Her possessions in the north might possibly be overrun at an immense sacrifice of blood and treasure; But do we want extension of territory? Are they worth the cost? And will we consent to garrison and maintain large armies in those regions of cold and barrenness, to secure them during the war? and can we hope at the *end* of it that they will be relinquished to us by England? Will privateering and patriotic volunteers, and even our courage avail us, when there is no *point* to which we can effectually direct our attack?—Is it not evident, fellow-citizens, that after all these immense preparations and expenditures, and which year after year must be repeated, that we shall be *put on our defence*; and instead of attack and injury to our enemy, and *satisfaction* obtained for wrongs, our armies, and all our efforts be exhausted in barely *protecting* our territory from sudden irruptions, and securing our cities and towns from destruction? Will this be satisfaction for wrongs, or obtain our rights?—On the other hand, will our enemy be idle, or is she incapable of doing us harm? and especially if our troops are marched to Canada. We having declared and commenced war upon her, is it not to be presumed that all her powers of injuring us, will be exerted? Do we not expect it, and can we justly complain if war with all its horrors is retaliated upon us—seeing we openly wage it by a public law? We should betray our duty and be unworthy of confidence, were we to suffer our feelings and our resentments to blind us to these considerations—a prudent nation, not wasteful of its own blood and heedless of consequences, will weigh their means and their dangers. They who decide on war and rashly plunge into the gulph it opens upon their country, without counting its cost, its length, its uncertainty and inevitable miseries, we may respect their motives and their spirit, but it is our bounden duty to warn our countrymen against *such* counsellors—if warning in so plain a case is requisite. It is wrong to inflame our

minds to vengeance and rush into greater evils, even in a just quarrel for particular offences, where our country is the stake, and there is danger, nay almost a certainty, that our loss will be infinitely greater than our gain. We are instigated, however, to fight for *honour*—to venture so many blessings, actually possessed, and to undergo so many *certain* distresses, in order to evince our *courage*. But, fellow-citizens, who doubts the courage of Americans? The world will witness for them that it is not *fear*, but *prudence*, and a love of country that restrains them from *war*—in the pursuit of which so many nations have lost their liberties, after glorious struggles in their just establishment. Do not, therefore, let us be hurried into it, for what mankind call *honour*! Let us rather think of the honor of securing *Peace* and *Union*; let us prefer the honor which discretion and humanity dictate—that of *saving* and preserving the blood and treasure, and virtue, and religion, and happiness, of our dear country. Let it be our *honor* to *prevent* the introduction of standing armies—the increase of taxes and public debt—the distresses of private life—fathers, sons, and brethren—our friends and fellow citizens—our patriots, torn from their homes—bleeding year after year, in this perhaps hopeless contest about orders in council and impressment:—And what must embitter all, dying on the side of the tyrant of France and Destroyer of Republics. And who shall say that ours will not fall by the same hand which has laid every other low, when by our aid he has accomplished his designs on England. Has he not thus weakened and ruined every People who have joined in his wars or trusted to his promises?

We cease, fellow-citizens, to reflect on these direful but certain *consequences*, of a *protracted WAR*. Your own cool reflections will go far beyond the reach of these remarks to open to you its certain miseries—its doubtful issue, and multiplied horrors. Those of us, and of you, who have witnessed its scenes of distress, in the revolution which is past, can want no dissuatives. We address ourselves more especially to those who may be strangers as yet to the calamities of war. In the sincerity of our hearts, (and what but motives of love to our country can influence us) we intreat our fellow-citizens, if any of them could lend their ear to this war, to **PAUSE**, before they give it their **APPROBATION**, or, by stimulating it forward, make too wide the breach to be healed.

Those of our rulers who imprudently have pledged themselves, step by step, *to war*—*those* who consult their passions, or

profit from commissions, army employments and public offices—*men* in the southern and western states who will suffer little ; *all*, indeed, who will *thrive* and grow great upon its length and devastations—nay, even *many* sincere friends, of their country, may unthinkingly, or rashly *advise* you to *War*. But in a matter of this importance, let each Citizen calmly judge for *himself*. Let the prudent, the impartial and disinterested—the *Great Body* of FARMERS, MECHANICS, LABORERS, MERCHANTS, and every class and description of industrious and GOOD CITIZENS, ask *themselves*, whether *they* and their families, expect that a long and deadly warfare, for such causes as have been mentioned, will be better than continued *Peace*, *Commerce*, *Agriculture*, *Security* and *Union*, among ourselves ?

Is it not evidently better to *regain* *Peace*, and all its *certain* advantages, than to proceed in the dangerous path of *War* ? Surely we may anticipate that a People, so enlightened and thoughtful of consequences, will not decide to *carry on* this war, so declared, longer than the time necessary to procure its *constitutional REPEAL*. We trust that most of our citizens will see the policy and the benefits of *Neutrality*, and of going back to the ground of *Negotiation*.

Do our Fellow-Citizens enquire then, *how* they are to prevent the calamities of *War*, and how they shall regain the blessings of *Peace* ? We answer—that with *yourselves* rests the *choice* of either. The act declaring war is but a *law*—with no force or permanence beyond any other law carried through by a majority in Congress. It differs only in its importance and in the dreadful consequences to society, if rashly declared by rulers, and blindly continued by the people. Being a *law*, however, it is our bounden duty to *obey* it—to yield our personal service under it when not legally exempted, or pay the requisitions made on property, when rightfully demanded ; and all this *while* it continues in force. But as on every *other* act of the public servants, it is the right of those who appoint them, to determine on its fitness to promote their good, the people are not *bound* to *approve* this or any other law ; nor is it their duty to enrage the public passions—exciting them to violence and denunciations ; inveighing, with thoughtless bitterness against those citizens who sincerely and constitutionally exercise the rights of freemen, in endeavors to *restore* speedy peace to the country.

We have heard and examined all the reasons and pretexts ; for this *War*. Our judgments—all the ties by which we feel

bound to the land of our nativity, constrain us to **DECIDE** for **PEACE**, and to invite all our fellow-citizens to join with us in its speedy attainment. Do you ask us again *how* you are *now* to obtain *Peace* and its *Blessings* since war is begun. We answer by **FREEDOM** of **SPEECH**—**FREEDOM** of the **PRESS** and by your *Rights* of **SUFFRAGE**.

It is the *high* prerogative of the **People**—it is the distinguishing excellence of their happy constitutions, when, from error, or sinister councils, grievous and ill-judged *laws* are passed by persons in office under them, contrary to their interest and wishes; it is, we say, the right and *Great Duty* of the *People*, to obtain a **REPEAL** of such obnoxious laws through the agency of *other* representatives. How many of such laws passed by even *large* majorities, has the *Voice of the People* condemned and their *new* representatives abolished. *Errors*, grievous errors, are fallen into by governments, as well as individuals!

Our path, then, fellow-citizens, is a familiar one; it is plain, lawful and honorable. We must obtain a *Repeal* of this law, by choosing Public Representatives both in the *Federal* and *State* Legislatures, who, instead of exciting *war* will comply with the *wishes* and fulfil the duties they owe to the *People*, by an immediate *repeal* of the act declaring war.

Our petitions for peace have been rejected—nay, contemptuously treated by many of the administrators of government. A majority of *our* state representatives in Congress, to their great honor, but in vain, have recorded their *solemn vote* against the *war bill*. They knew upon whom the *weight* of it was to fall!—Not upon the chief instigators of it, but upon *their own* and the *eastern states*! It is not to be expected that the *men* who have made the war, will repeal the *law*, and thus restore peace. Nay, we are told, it *shall* continue until England yields to *conditions* which we may well believe she never will yield to—especially when attempted to be extorted from her by *force of arms*.

Those who have commenced the war say they aim at *peace* also, and expect to arrive at it through a long and precarious struggle, by *forcing* England to submission. The means we propose for peace, is to *end* this impolitic and hazardous undertaking at once, by a *change* of rulers.—A very *few* friends of *peace* added to those numerous, able and patriotic opposers of war, now in our councils, will effect a *repeal* of the *war-bill*.

This will place us, by a mere ordinary act of *legislation*, on the ground we were;—It will then be for us to stand on

the *defensive*, and *treat* with Great-Britain in the true spirit of peace and mutual concession. We need not fear that our *new* councils will dishonor or abandon their country—we believe new councils *can* make a speedy and honorable adjustment, but not while the war bill is in the way. It is the evident interest of England to be on good terms with America; this we repeat, will be easily effected, when the administration is changed, and persons not *committed* to this *course* of things, are chosen; and when this *now* insuperable bar of war is removed, by repealing the law which declared it.

In the mean time, and until this salutary change can be effected by our VOTES, we must indeed suffer much from hostility, and many losses be sustained; nothing however compared with those a *continuance* of war will produce. Our ELECTIONS are near—they ought and can ensure to us an end of these scenes, and of all the calamities which protracted hostilities, growing more dreadful as they lengthen, will inevitably produce. We intreat you, fellow-citizens, then, to decide on PEACE, not *through* war, but by the constitutional and speedy effect of your *Elections*. Choose men to *represent* you who you know are for Peace, and an *honourable, speedy* and *practicable* adjustment of differences with Great-Britain. Our happy constitution, foreseeing and providing against the fatal errors into which even *majorities* in the public councils often fall, puts it in the power of the *people*, to get back to the ground of safety, by procuring a correction of the proceeding, through *new* representatives. We are soon to be called to the choice of *Electors* of President and Vice-President—members of Congress, and our own *state* officers. Never could a call be made upon us more solemnly to UNITE; not to APPROVE, carry on, and inflame this impolitic and rashly declared *War*; but to *unite* in adding to our public councils faithful advocates of Peace, Commerce and Agriculture; men who are *not* pledged by their previous conduct, passions and interests of office, to persevere in an injurious and uncertain warfare—Men who will join with those now in office and friendly to peace in its restoration. Happy for our country, if a majority is attained in the public departments, who may be disposed to *repeal* the war act, in the next Congress: our disputes with Great-Britain, which are nothing in the scale against peace, may then be quickly and honorably adjusted, not by the SWORD, as is now preferred, but thro' the agency of mutual interests and friendly negotiation.

It is amazing that a few men, capable of turning the majority *either* way, should, in such a state of unpreparedness, with divided councils, a divided country, and against the declared and solemn remonstrances of the people, have cast their votes on the side of involving these states in the horrors, uncertainty and burthens of War!

In *conducting* our measures to obtain a change of councils, this CONVENTION feel it their duty to declare, they ought to be temperate, well weighed and firm; it is not a time for the true friends of their country to shrink from their duty. This is no question of a small concern. It must and should call to its aid, the sober thought, the reflecting judgment, and the *steady* purposes, of the good and independent electors and citizens of New-Jersey, no matter of what *party*. It is their privilege, and great security, when GRIEVANCES occur, to redress them by a CHANGE OF MEN AND MEASURES.

This is the remedy at hand to us, on this trying occasion—and like men and brethren let us lay hold of it.

That a War Party is organized, who will stimulate the passions of the people, by appeals to their power and prowess, and by exciting prejudice against those who perceive the necessity of *changing* our public councils, is already but too evident.

This Convention is aware of the frequency and effect of thus operating on the public mind: But their confidence rests on the final good sense and judgment of a wise and discerning people. They will look to the *men* and the *principles*—to the *reasons*, which should have *most* weight; above all, their own solid reflections on the nature, evils and uncertainties of a War, will, we trust, lead to a right conclusion, even though some of them may entertain resentments justly toward England.

Even *those* who are for War, and who shall take such means to succeed in *continuing* it, are yet entitled to the rights of free opinions and free suffrage. On the *other* hand, this Convention feel it due to the great body of their fellow-citizens, whom they represent, and who are opposed to this war ---of all parties---to *assert* and *maintain* in their behalf, the great RIGHTS of a FREE PRESS---FREE SPEECH and OPINIONS---and of FREE SUFFRAGE :---These are the *bulwarks* of liberty: Bad *laws* and misguided councils, measures most fatal to the best interests of society, would proceed

and be executed with high handed oppression---they could never be changed---if force---terror---and menaces, could lawfully be employed to silence complaint, and hide the people's interests and dangers from their view: Every man in society has a right---it is a duty to himself and country, publicly to examine the *policy* and tendencies of any law; to obey it while in *force*;---but if he deems it pernicious, to state every objection to it which exists, and every evil consequence which may flow from its *continuance*, in order to obtain its *repeal*, by electing men who *will* repeal it. Especially is it the duty of every man, who is convinced that a law *declaring war*, is most impolitic, and will, if continued, ruin, or go far to ruin the country, to lift his voice on the side of peace and of repeal. Should, therefore, any *man* or *set* of men, be so lost to decency, and so inimical to the liberties of speech, of the press, and of suffrage, as to attempt to overawe the people---by menaces, by terror, under the pretexts so often used to stifle truth, that they are traitors, tories, and enemies---because they advocate a *change* of rulers and repeal of a law, which they deem the greatest grievance ever brought on them; of such men, promoting such arbitrary doctrines by such unworthy means, let us all beware. They cannot, fellow-citizens, be the friends of freedom or their country:---Such conduct will receive, as it ought, the condemnation of every independent freeman, be he for *War* or *Peace*.

Let those who advocate the *continuance* of the men in power and of this law, be heard;---let them freely *prove* the necessity, benefits and *blessings* to the country, if they can, of *the war*:---On the other hand, those who consider that our councils should be *changed*, and the *war law* be *repealed*, as productive of many and irreparable grievances and consequences;---it is *their* right and duty to set forth their reasons, and by every lawful and public means promote the wished for *change*. If this were not so, an infatuated or misguided administration have only to declare War, and it becomes *perpetual*---no voice must be heard to procure its repeal.

Already have many states---a great portion of the people---most of our own immediate representatives, and distinguished men in our councils---protested against the measure of war as big with danger to our Interests, Liberty and Union: They are *now*, since its passage---by addresses,---by the press---by freedom of speech and opinions

exposing its mischiefs and dangers—and preparing the minds of their fellow-citizens to obtain its *repeal*, by *changing* the public officers: Are all these States, distinguished men and citizens, enemies and traitors to the country?—Those who shall inculcate such sentiments and principles as these, may for a short time succeed in heating the passions of an unthinking few—but its influence cannot reach, to intimidate or controul, the *free electors* of these states, from setting forth the grievances of laws, or other measures, or *changing* the councils which made them—and thus, in the only constitutional way they have, producing their repeal.

Fellow-citizens, we *close* this address, with repeating our hope and belief—that the only great *question* with us all, in our ensuing *Elections*—will be—*whether* we shall *change* our councils and *repeal* the *war bill*; treating further with England on the points of difference, in amicable negotiation, before the War has become fixed too deep to be removed—Or whether we prefer its *continuance*, with all its certain evils and uncertain prospects, of obtaining the least good.

This is a fair, and lawful, and constitutional question; it is the most solemn one ever brought before the people, and their VOTES, after hearing and reflecting on all the reasons for and against, must and ought to decide it.—For ourselves, we have carefully avoided every subject and circumstance, relative to other questions or measures of the administration. This law declaring war, stands by itself—we think, sincerely and *unanimously*, that the best and most important interests of the country, demand its *speedy repeal*, and that to effect this, a *new administration should be chosen*. Our reasons are before you and the world—we have presented them to no particular set of men, or party; but to ALL. We have laid aside every feeling, but what arises out of this momentous question—involved so many dear and permanent interests. Our language is plain and unreserved, as our rights and duty demanded in so great a cause. Our proceedings are wrapt in no *secrecy*—nor are we unknown to our fellow-citizens. What we have said and advised—is the result of calm reflection and undoubted conviction. If we have erred we trust no man can charge us with being enemies to our country—bound to it as we are, by so many ties of interest, affection and duty. We are the open, sincere advocates, and shall be, in all our rela-

tions and situations, of a *change* in our public councils, and a speedy *repeal*, by Congress, of the *act declaring War*.

In this change of councils exists the common safety---It will prudently arrest the dangerous career into which an ill-timed and unnecessary *War* is hastening the country---and preserve from further destruction, more SUBSTANTIAL BLESSINGS, YET IN OUR POSSESSION, than any other People now in the World enjoy.

Signed by order of the Convention,

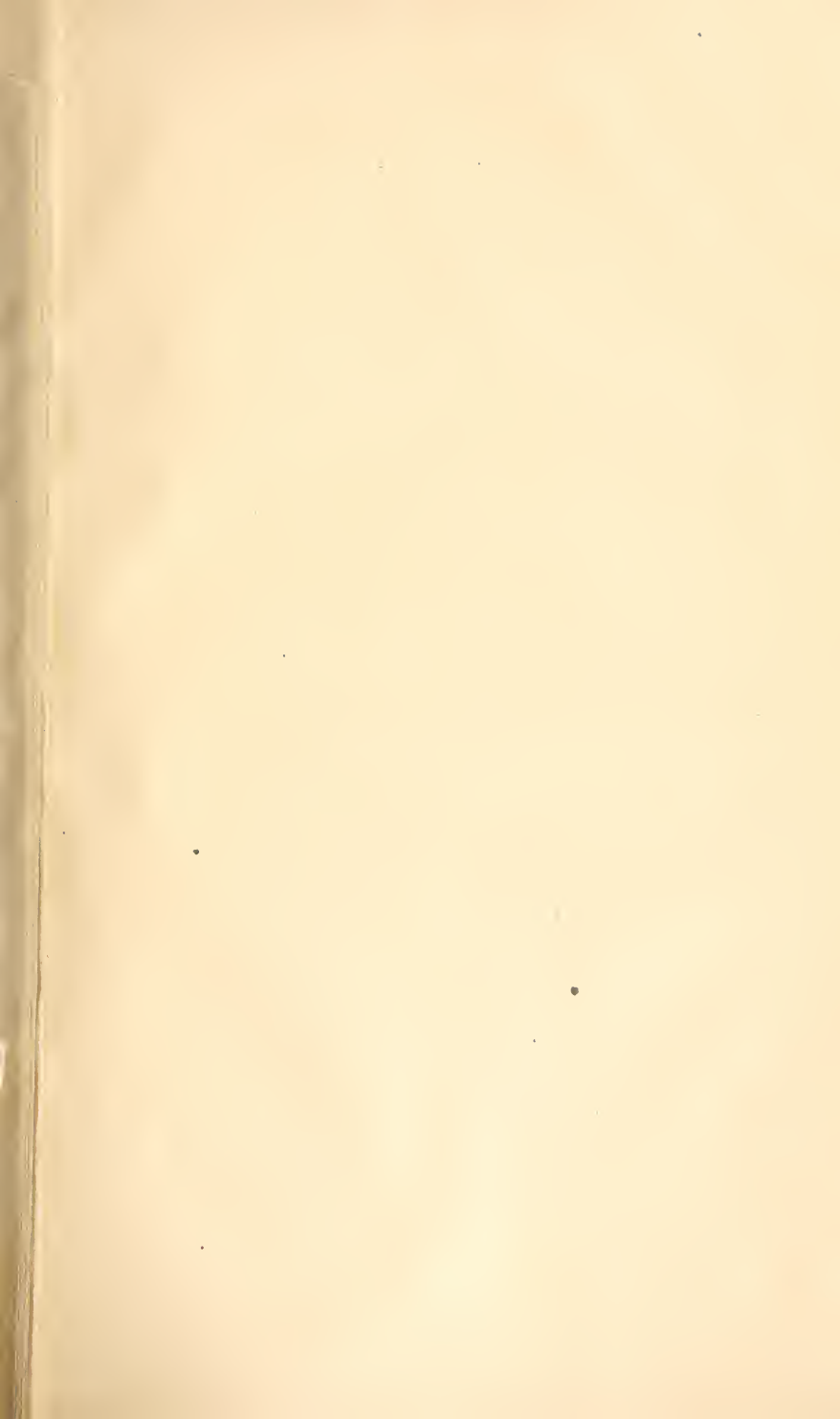
JONATHAN ELMER, *Chairman*.

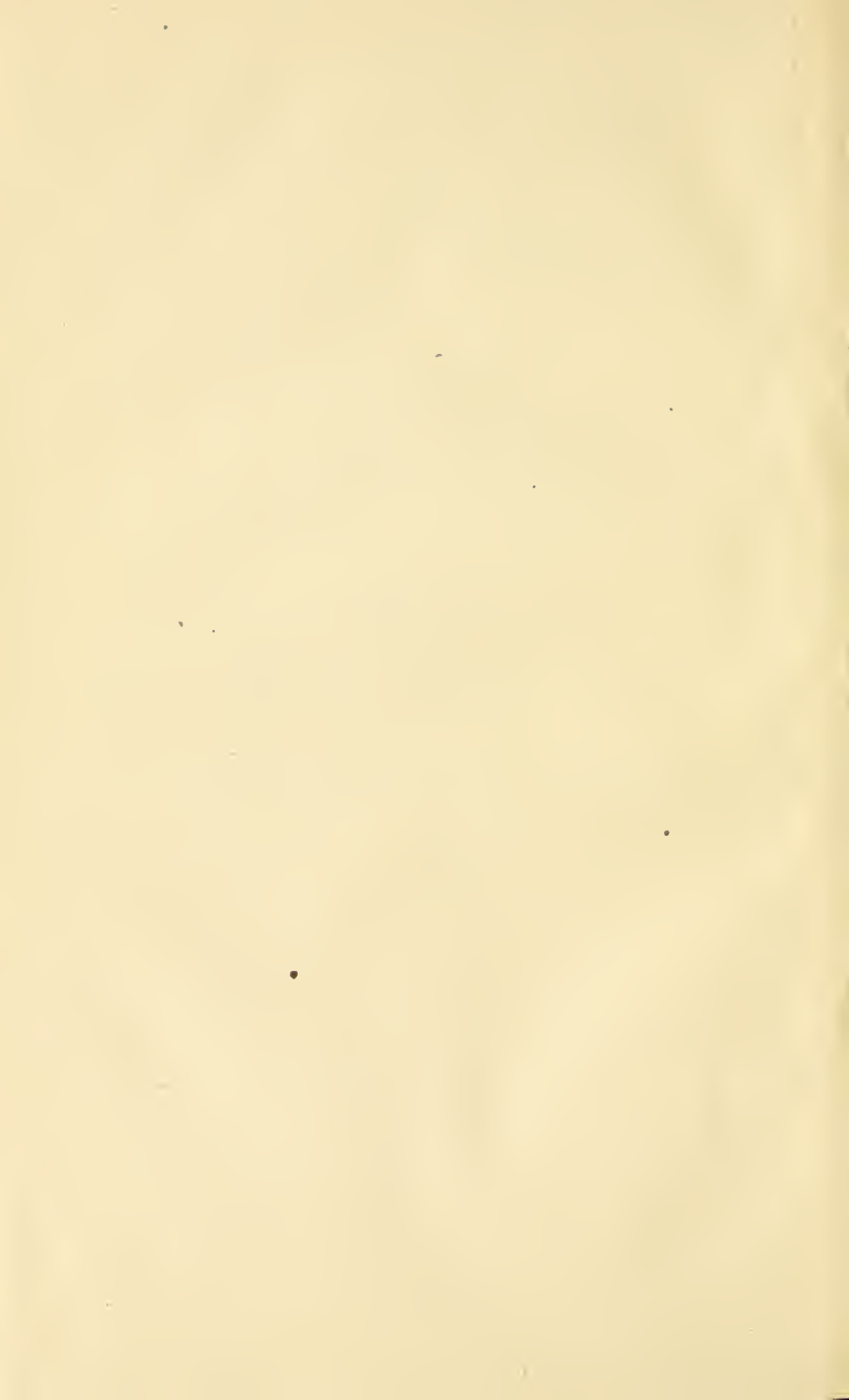
JOHN OUTWATER, *Secretary*.

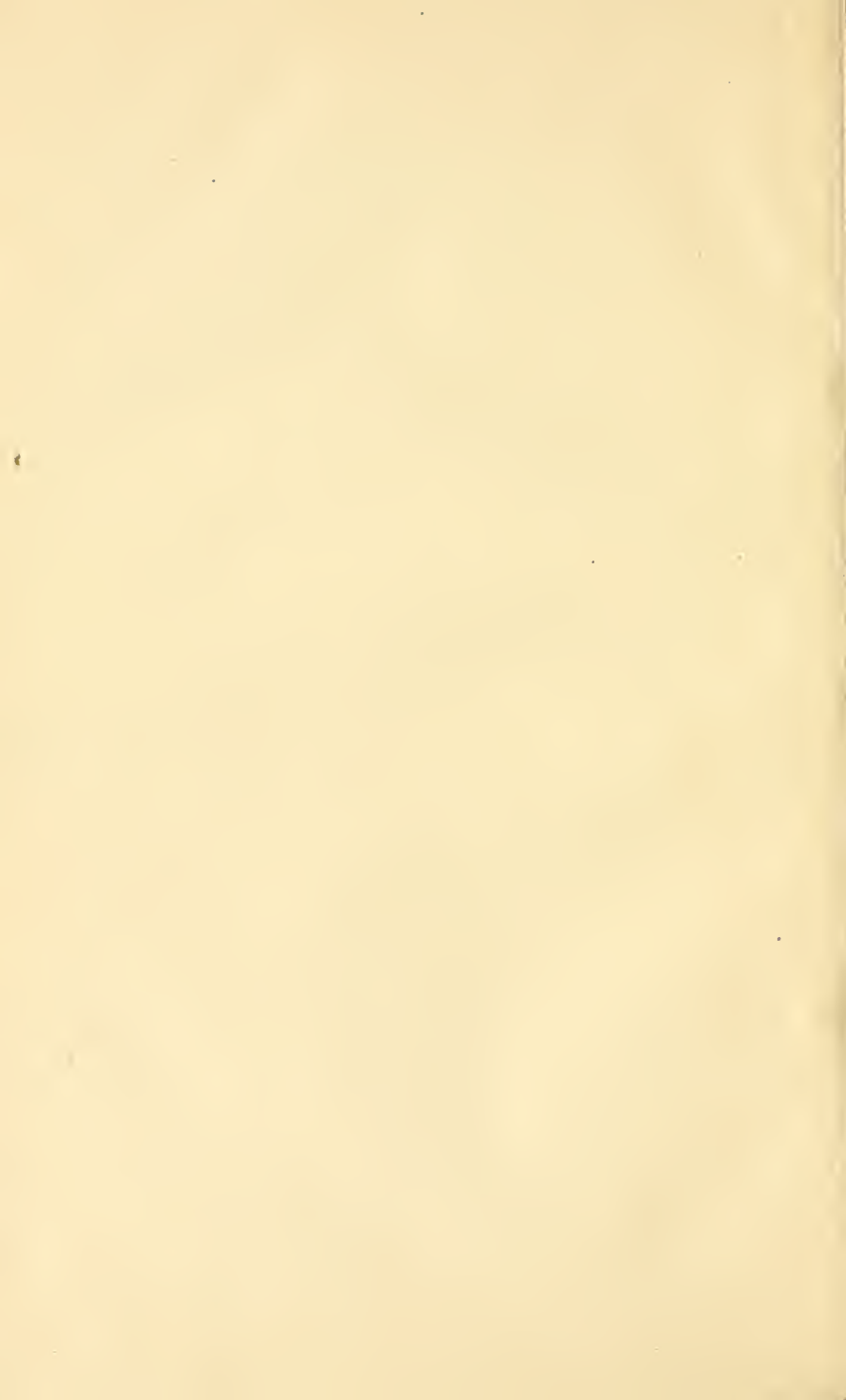
Trenton, 4th July, 1812.

ERATA.

Page 11---7th line from the bottom, for the word "*ensue*" read *fail*.

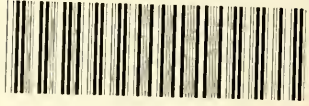








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