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Chapter V. Proceedings relative to the admission of Vermont into the union.

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pelled the inhabitants to swear allegiance to the British king. Other towns were also visited by small parties of the enemy in the course of the war, but during the period of the negotiation, mentioned in the last section, and while Vermont was wholly at their mercy, the parties did very little injury and probably had orders from the British generals not to molest the inhabitants.

HISTORY OF VERMONT.

CHAPTER V.

PROCEEDINGS RELATIVE TO THE ADMISSION OF VERMONT INTO THE UNION.

SECTION I.

Extending from the completion of the eastern and western union with Vermont on the 22d of June, 1781 to the dissolution of the same on the 22d day of February 1782.

1. Vermont, having completed her eastern and western unions, as related in the preceding chapter, appointed Jonas Fay, Ira Allen, and Bezaleel Woodward, delegates to the American Congress, to negoti-

ate her admission into the federal union. Full powers were given them to complete the arrangement; and, if they effected their object they were authorized to take their seat in Congress as the representatives of Vermont. These delegates arrived at Philadelphia, in the beginning of August, and about the time of the publication of Lord Germain's letter, as already mentioned. On the 7th of August, 1781, Congress took up the subject of their mission, and appointed a committee of five persons to confer with the delegates from Vermont, and agree with them upon the terms of admission, provided Congress should see fit to recognize Vermont as an independent state.

2. On the 18th of August, a conference took place between this committee and the delegates from Vermont, at which sundry questions were proposed to the latter respecting the extent, population, and resources of Vermont, and the views and wishes of the inhabitants; to all of which answers were returned. On the 20th, the committee made their report to Congress; whereupon that body adopted the following resolution. "*Resolved*, That it be an indispensable preliminary to the recognition of the independence of the people inhabiting the territory called Vermont, and their admission into the federal union, that they explicitly relinquish all demands of lands or jurisdiction on the east side of the west bank of Connecticut river, and on the west side of a line beginning at the north west corner of Massachusetts, thence running twenty miles east of Hudson river, so far as said river continues northeasterly in its general course, then by the west bounds of the townships granted by the late government of New Hampshire, to the river runing into East Bay, thence along said river and bay to lake Champlain, thence along the waters of said lake to latitude 45 degrees north."

3. Vermont and New York were both dissatisfied

with this resolution—Vermont, because it required as a condition of her admission into the union, that she should dissolve the agreeable connexions which she had just formed—New York, because it recognized the claim, against which she had so long and so earnestly contended;—the one, because it bereft Vermont of one half her present territory, resources and importance—the other, because it would allow Vermont still to have something left, which she could call her own. This appears from the proceedings of their respective legislatures.

4. The legislature of Vermont met at Charlestown, on the east side of Connecticut river, in October, and on the 16th of that month, the foregoing resolutions were laid before them. The resolution held out to Vermont a faint prospect of an admission into the federal union with her original territory, but having lost much of her confidence in the assurances of Congress and having now consolidated her unions at home, she felt herself in a condition to demand better terms than the relinquishment of one half her territory and population, to secure the independence of the other half. After deliberating and debating upon the subject for several days, the assembly, on the 19th of October, voted that they could not comply with the foregoing resolution of Congress.

5. They declared that a compliance would destroy the foundation of the harmony which then subsisted in the state, and be a violation of the solemn compact entered into by the articles of union and confederation—that they would remain firm in the principles on which they had assumed the powers of government—that they would hold inviolate the articles of union, which connected the parts of the state together—and that they would submit the question of their independence to the arbitration of no power under heaven. They however declared their willingness to submit any questions, which might arise, with regard to jurisdictional limits between

them and the neighboring states, to arbitrators mutually chosen; and, when admitted into the American union, they would not object to submitting such disputes to Congress.

6. The Legislature of New York, on the other hand, regarding the resolution of Congress as a virtual determination of the controversy between that state and Vermont, passed a number of resolutions, and a solemn protest against the proceedings of Congress. Having stated their claims, and some former proceedings of Congress on the subject, they went on to express their disapprobation and alarm at the evident intention of Congress, from *political expedience*, to establish an *arbitrary* boundary, which excluded from that state a great part of its territory. They declared that, in the opinion of the legislature, Congress had no authority, by the articles of confederation, to intermeddle with the territorial extent, or jurisdiction, of either of the United States, except in case of dispute between two or more states in the union,—that to carry into execution said resolution of Congress, would be an assumption of power and an infraction of the articles of confederation, and that they therefore solemnly protested against the same.

7. With the above mentioned resolution of Congress, a verbal message had been sent by General Washington to Governor Chittenden, desiring to know what were the real designs, wishes and intentions of the people of Vermont;—whether they would be satisfied with the independence proposed in said resolution, or seriously thought of joining the enemy and becoming a British province. On the 14th of November, Governor Chittenden returned an unequivocal and decisive answer to the above communication, in which he said that no people on the continent were more attached to the cause of America than the people of Vermont; but, that they would sooner join the British in Canada, than submit to the government of New York—that, driven to des-

peration by the injustice of those, who should have been her friends, Vermont was now obliged to adopt policy in the room of power. He ascribed the late resolution of Congress, not to the influence of friends, but the power of enemies, believing that Lord Germain's letter had procured that, which the public virtue of the people could not obtain.

8. During these proceedings, new difficulties were opening to Vermont in her eastern and western unions. A communication was received by Governor Chittenden from one of the sheriffs in the eastern union, informing him that the government of New Hampshire, were about taking coercive measures to bring those citizens of that state, who had joined Vermont, again under their laws and authority. The governor, on the 14th of December, directed General Paine, then lieutenant governor of the state, to call out the militia on the east side of the mountains, for the assistance of the sheriffs and the defence of the citizens; and, if armed force should be employed by New Hampshire, that he should repel it by the same. Mr Paine forwarded a copy of this order to the council of New Hampshire, and informed them, that, if hostilities were commenced, he should execute his orders, and that New Hampshire must be accountable for the consequences. With these communications, commissioners were also sent to New Hampshire, to endeavor to accommodate matters, and prevent the effusion of blood.

9. On the other hand a military force was called out in New York, to prevent Vermont from executing her laws over the inhabitants of her western union, and to aid the sheriff of New York in apprehending several persons in the territory who had rendered themselves particularly obnoxious to the government of that state. This force was commanded by General Ganesvoort, who, being informed that Colonel Walbridge was advancing with a large body of troops from the grants, wrote to him on the 18th

of December, to be informed of the object of his movement. Walbridge replied that it was to protect the inhabitants, who, in consequence of the union, professed allegiance to the state of Vermont; that he wished conciliatory measures might be adopted, but, if those persons who professed to be citizens of Vermont, should be imprisoned and their property destroyed, he would not be accountable for the consequences.

10. Affairs seemed now to have reached an alarming crisis, and all parties trembled at the prospect of a civil war. Happy was it that hostilities were not commenced before the parties had taken time to reflect upon the consequences of such a measure; for when they looked at the momentous struggle in which their country was engaged, every philanthropist was fully convinced that no differences between the states should, on any account, be permitted to endanger the cause of American liberty and independence. Fortunately, about this time, Governor Chittenden received a letter from General Washington, dictated by his paternal solicitude for the good of his country, and for a happy termination of the troubles in relation to Vermont. This letter is dated January 1st, 1782, and from it we extract the following paragraph.

11. "It is not my business, nor do I think it necessary, now to discuss the origin of the right of a number of inhabitants, to that tract of country, formerly distinguished by the name of the New Hampshire grants, and now by that of Vermont. I will take it for granted that their right was good because Congress, by their resolve of the 7th of August, imply it; and by that of the 20th are willing fully to confirm it, provided the new state is confined to certain described bounds. It appears therefore to me, that the dispute of boundary, is the only one that exists; and, *that* being removed, all other difficulties would be removed also, and the matter terminate to the satisfaction of all parties. You have nothing to do,

but to withdraw your jurisdiction to the confines of your own limits, and obtain an acknowledgement of independence and sovereignty under the resolve of the 20th of August, for so much territory as does not interfere with the ancient established bounds of New Hampshire, New York and Massachusetts. In my private opinion, while it behoves the delegates to do ample justice to a people, sufficiently respectable by their numbers and entitled, by other claims, to be admitted into the confederation, it becomes them also, to attend to the interests of their constituents, and see, that under the appearance of justice to one, they do not materially injure the others. I am apt to think this is the prevailing opinion of Congress."

12. Being endeared to all the friends of liberty by his integrity and virtue and by his disinterested exertions and sacrifices for the good of his country, such a communication from General Washington might reasonably be expected to exert a powerful influence upon the minds of the leading men in Vermont, and the event showed that it did. At the next meeting of the legislature, which was held at Bennington, this letter was laid before them. It served to open their eyes to the former errors of government, and, knowing it to have come from a man, who had only the interests of his *whole* country at heart, his advice was received with the greatest deference, and after mature deliberation upon the subject, the assembly on the 22d of February, 1782, resolved to comply with the preliminary required by the resolution of Congress on the 20th of August, and relinquish all claims to jurisdiction beyond the bounds therein mentioned.

13 Thus was dissolved a union which had greatly increased the power and consequence of Vermont, and which, it was believed, had prevented the division of Vermont, between New Hampshire and New York. But this union was not dissolved without a

struggle and much dissatisfaction in those parts which were cut off from Vermont, by the prescribed boundaries. The inhabitants of those parts had eagerly sought the union with Vermont, and they were too well satisfied with it willingly to return to their allegiance to those states from which they had withdrawn.

14. Vermont, having complied with the requirements of Congress, now confidently expected an immediate recognition of her independence, and an admission into the federal union; and with it a termination of the disagreeable controversy with New York. The legislature therefore proceeded to choose four agents to arrange the terms of admission, and then take their seats in Congress as representatives of Vermont. But in their expectations the people of Vermont were again doomed to disappointment; a disappointment, the pain and mortification of which could only be exceeded by the impolicy and injustice of the neglect which occasioned it. Congress still refused to admit Vermont into the union and again reverted to her policy of evasion and delay.

SECTION II.

*Proceedings of Congress—Disturbances in Vermont—
from the Dissolutions of the unions in Vermont Feb.
22d, 1782, to the Treaty of Peace between the United
States and Great Britain, January 20th, 1783.*

1. The refusal of Vermont on the 18th of October, 1781, to comply with the resolution of the 20th of August, had been communicated to Congress, and while the assembly of Vermont, in February 1782, was reconsidering the subject and effecting a com-

pliance with said resolution, Congress was engaged in warm debate upon their preceding refusal. On the first day of March, several spirited resolutions were proposed and discussed in Congress. These resolutions declared that, if Vermont did not, within one month from the time these resolutions were communicated to Governor Chittenden, comply with the resolution of the 20th of August, and relinquish her jurisdiction beyond the bounds therein named, such neglect and refusal would be regarded as an indication of hostility to the United States.

2. In that case Congress would regard the pretensions of Vermont for admission into the union as fallacious and delusive, and, would thereafter consider the lands in Vermont to the eastward of the ridge of the Green Mountains, as granted to New Hampshire, and the lands to the westward of said line as granted to New York; and that the commander in chief of the American armies be directed to employ the military forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into full execution. After a long debate and several trials, it was found that a vote could not be obtained to pass these resolutions, and a few days after, as the excitement was beginning to subside, the agents from Vermont arrived at Philadelphia.

3. These agents were Jonas Fay, Moses Robinson, Paul Spooner, and Isaac Tichenor, and they were instructed "to negotiate and complete on the part of Vermont, the admission thereof into the federal union, and to subscribe articles of perpetual confederation thereunto." On the 31st of March, 1782, they officially laid before Congress the proceedings of the legislature of Vermont on the 22d of February, by which they had fully complied with the requirement of the resolution of the 20th of August. Congress now again took up the subject and referred it to a committee of five members, who, on the 17th of April, reported;—That in the opinion of the

committee, Vermont had fully complied with the resolution of the 20th of August as preliminary to the recognition of her sovereignty and independence and admission into the federal union; and that the *conditional* promise of such recognition and admission by Congress, is thereby become *absolute* and *necessary* to be performed.

4. The committee then proposed a resolution declaring "That the district, or territory called Vermont, as defined and limited in the resolution of Congress of the 20th of August, 1781, be, and it hereby is, recognized and acknowledged, by the name of the state of Vermont, as free, sovereign and independent; and that a committee be appointed to treat and confer with the agents and delegates from said state, upon the terms and mode of the admission of said state into the federal union." When this report was read, motions were successively made that its consideration be assigned to the first Tuesday in October, the first Tuesday in June, and to Monday next, all of which were decided in the negative.

5. By these votes it became evident that Congress did not intend to come to any decision upon the affairs of Vermont, and the agents, of Vermont disappointed at the result, addressed a letter to the president of Congress on the 19th of April, and immediately left Philadelphia. In this communication they say, that in consequence of the plighted faith of Congress, and the advice of gentlemen of the first character in America, Vermont had been induced to comply in the most ample manner with the resolution of the 20th of August, and that they had officially communicated said compliance to Congress. They expressed their disappointment at the delay of Congress to execute, on their part, the spirit of said resolution, and pointed out the critical situation, to which Vermont was reduced by casting off a considerable portion of her strength,—by being ex-

posed to the main force of the enemy in Canada, and by receiving no aid from the United States, in whose cause she had freely fought and suffered.

6. When these proceedings of Congress became known in Vermont they produced universal dissatisfaction. It was the general opinion that the resolution of the 20th of August, had been designed to dupe the assembly to a compliance for the purpose of weakening Vermont and rendering it less dangerous to contravene her designs and wishes. Faith in the virtue and integrity of Congress was nearly destroyed; and by these measures of that body, the people, and the assembly of Vermont, were determined to adhere to the boundaries, to which they had agreed, and rely upon their own strength, resources, and management for defence and safety; and urge no further upon Congress their right to a co federation with the United States. Still, that it might appear to the world that Vermont was not in fault, the assembly at their session in October, again appointed agents with full powers to complete arrangements for her admission into the union.

7. Notwithstanding the unsettled and embarrassing state of her relations to Congress and the neighboring states, the internal tranquility of Vermont had been for some time, but little disturbed. Her political institutions had been gradually maturing, and the organization of her government had assumed a regularity and efficiency which commanded the obedience and respect of the great body of the citizens. New York had not relinquished her claim to jurisdiction over the territory, but she had not, of late, made any serious effort to exercise it; and had contented herself with opposing the admission of Vermont into the union. Still there were some among the citizens of Vermont, whose submission was reluctant, and who were ready to embrace any favorable opportunity to renounce their allegiance and support the claims of New York.

8. As the continental troops had been withdrawn from the northern frontier, and as Vermont was exposed to invasion by the enemy from Canada, she found it necessary to order a draft of militia for the purpose of defence. Those citizens of Vermont, who were disaffected toward the government, resolved to take this opportunity to resist its authority. They were encouraged in this measure by the governor of New York, who gave commissions to sundry persons in the southeastern part of the county of Windham, and had recommended the organization of a military force for the purpose of opposing Vermont, and enforcing the laws of New York. Vermont became alarmed at these proceedings, and, having employed lenient measures in vain, ordered out the militia to suppress them. The leaders in the rebellion were taken, five of the most obnoxious of whom were banished from the state, and the others fined or otherwise punished.

9. Disappointed in their attempts to resist the authority of Vermont, the insurgents applied to the government of New York, under which they pretended to have acted, for support and remuneration for their sacrifices and losses in consequence of their rebellion. But the desired support New York was not able to afford. Vermont feared not her power, and therefore her promises and her threatenings were alike disregarded. A remonstrance was then forwarded to Congress setting forth that Vermont had proceeded to exercise jurisdiction over the persons and properties of sundry persons, who professed themselves to be subject to the state of New York; This remonstrance was seconded by a letter from the governor of New York, and on the 14th day of November, 1782, the committee in Congress to whom the subject was referred, reported "that the measures complained of were probably occasioned by the state of New York having given commissions both civil and military, to persons residing in Ver-

mont." They also recommended, that said commissions be revoked, and that Vermont should make satisfaction to the persons, who had been banished, or who had sustained damages. But Congress refused to adopt the resolutions recommended.

10. On the 5th of December, Congress again took up the matter, but instead of fulfilling their engagement to Vermont made by the resolution of the 20th of August, 1781, their proceedings were full of censure and threatening against Vermont, for having exercised authority over persons, who professed allegiance to the state of New York, in violation of the resolutions of Congress, passed on the 24th of September, 1779, and on the 2d of June, 1780. Among other things they resolved, that Vermont be required to make full restitution to the persons condemned to banishment or confiscation of property, and that they be not molested on their return to said district. They close by resolving "that the United States will take effectual measures to enforce a compliance with the aforesaid resolutions, in case the same shall be disobeyed by the people of the said district."

11. The faith of the people of Vermont in the wisdom and integrity of Congress, weakened by several of their former acts, was by the foregoing nearly destroyed, and with it the reverence and respect of the people for that body. The governor and council of Vermont returned a spirited remonstrance to the above resolutions, in which Congress was reminded of their solemn engagement to the state of Vermont, in the resolution of the 20th of August, and which, after the fullest compliance on the part of said state with the requirement of Congress, Congress had refused or neglected to fulfill. Congress were told, that, by their own articles of confederation, they had no right to intermeddle with the internal policy of any of the United States; and least of all with that of Vermont, from which she had received

no delegated authority whatever. It asserted that Vermont had as much authority to prescribe measures to Congress, as Congress had to revoke the legal decisions of Vermont in the case of the criminals already mentioned.

The remonstrance went on to assert that Vermont had had an independent jurisdiction since the royal decision in 1764, and that they did not intend to be resolved out of it by the influence, which their *old adversary*, New York, possessed in Congress:—that Vermont had no controversy with the United States, as a whole; but that she was at all times, ready and able, to vindicate her rights and liberties against the usurpations of New York. It declares that Congress has been so mutable in their resolutions respecting Vermont, that it is impossible to know on what grounds to find them. At one time they guarantee a part of her lands to New Hampshire and New York, still leaving a place for the existence of Vermont though much diminished in extent. At another time they are controlling the internal government of Vermont. And again, at another time prescribing terms of confederation, with the United States and when these are complied with on the part of Vermont, Congress will not ratify the union.

14. After giving a full reply to all the topics contained in the resolutions of Congress, the remonstrance concludes with a request to be immediately admitted into the union, and with an assurance that she will not recede from her compliance with the resolution of the 20th of August 1780. The assembly met at Windsor in February 1783, and on the 26th, a remonstrance, like the preceding, spirited and decisive, was forwarded by that body to Congress. It announced in the plainest terms that Congress had no business to intermeddle in the internal affairs of Vermont, and that Vermont was fully determined to maintain her independence and jurisdiction within her own limits. She therefore continued, unawed

by the threatenings of Congress, to enforce the decisions of her courts of justice and in the administration of the affairs of government, and Congress, it appears, did not judge it prudent to attempt, by force to carry into effect her resolutions of the 5th of December 1782.

SECTION III.

Disturbances in Vermont growing out of the controversy with New York.

1. The disturbances in the county of Windham, to which we alluded in the preceding section, perhaps deserve a more particular notice than was there given. At the first organization of the government of Vermont in 1778, there were many people in the southeastern part of the state, who were in favor of New York and of course opposed to the independence of Vermont. These persons embraced every opportunity to embarrass the newly organized government, and at several times resisted the authority of Vermont by force. The centre of this opposition seems to have been at Guilford, at that time the most populous town in the state numbering nearly 3000 souls. During most of the revolutionary war a majority of the inhabitants of this town were friendly to New York and were therefore denominated "Yorkers;" and at their town meetings it was usually a part of their business to appoint "a committee to defend the town against the pretended state of Vermont."

2. In several of the neighboring towns, particularly in Brattleborough, the disaffected towards the government of Vermont were considerably numerous, and there was in these towns an organized opposition to the government of the state, and conventions of

delegates from them occasionally assembled for the purpose of adopting an uniform plan of resistance throughout the whole. The measures of the government, most vigorously opposed, were the collection of taxes and the drafting of men for the defence of the state; and it was a customary part of their business at their town meeting in Guilford, where the Yorkers were a majority, to appoint a special "committee to forbid the constable acting." And to secure a majority at their meetings the *new state* people were frequently excluded from the polls by an armed force, collected from the neighboring towns.

3. It appears that in Guilford and in some of the other towns, the two parties had each a town organization of their own, and that, in some cases there were two sets of town officers, one professing allegiance to Vermont and the other to New York. Between these, and their partizans on each side, there were frequent skirmishes, some of which were not terminated without the shedding of blood. During the years 1783, and 1784, the enmity of the parties was carried to an alarming extent. Social order was at an end; Physicians were not allowed to visit the sick without a pass from the several committees. Handbills from various quarters inflamed the minds of the people. Relatives and neighbors were arrayed against each other. The laws of Vermont were disregarded by the partisans of New York and her executive officers were openly resisted.

4. In this state of things, in the summer of 1783, General Ethan Allen was directed to call out the militia for enforcing the laws of Vermont, and for suppressing insurrection and disturbances in the county of Windham. Allen proceeded from Bennington at the head of 100 Green Mountain Boys, and on his arrival at Guilford, he issued the following proclamation. "*I, Ethan Allen, declare that unless the people of Guilford peaceably submit to the authority of Vermont, the town shall be made as deso-*

late as were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah." The Yorkers having fired upon Allen and his men, were pursued, and all either taken prisoners or dispersed. Those, taken, were put under bonds for their good behavior and were compelled to furnish supplies and quarters for the troops. Under Allen's martial law the constable found no difficulty in the collection of taxes: nor was he very scrupulous about the sum assessed in the tax bill. Produce, horses, cattle and sheep, and whatever else could be found belonging to the most violent Yorkers were taken and sold for the benefit of the state.

5. During the following winter the disturbances became still more serious. On the night of the 17th of January, 1784, a party of Yorkers from Guilford attacked the inn of Josiah Arns in Brattleborough, which was the quarters of General Farnsworth, Major Boyden, Constable Waters, and some others holding offices under the government of Vermont, and demanded the immediate surrender of Waters, who had been guilty of extorting taxes from persons professing allegiance to New York. Not being in a condition to make an effectual resistance to an armed force, Waters voluntarily surrendered himself into the hands of the Yorkers, but not till after they had fired about 30 balls through the house, and wounded Major Boyden in the leg, and shot a traveler through the thigh. Waters was carried into Massachusetts, but the party being pursued by a few Vermonters, he was released the next day and returned.

6. The legislature of Vermont had, at their session in October, "voted to raise 200 men for the defence of Windham county against the Yorkers." After the affair at Brattleborough, finding the people of Guilford determined to oppose the collection of taxes, Colonel S. R. Bradley, at the head of this force, proceeded, January 18th, to that town for the purpose of enforcing the collections. The parties of Yorkers

were all dispersed without opposition, excepting one which had collected near the line of Massachusetts. This party consisting of 25 men, fired upon the Vermonters as they advanced, by which one man was severely wounded. The Yorkers then retreated with all possible speed, over the line into Massachusetts. Several of the leaders were, however, taken and brought to merited punishment by whipping, fine, and pillory. Another skirmish occurred on the 5th of March, between a company of Vermonters under Captain Knights, and a party of Yorkers near the south part of Guilford, in which the latter had one man killed and several wounded.

7. These disturbances continued during most of the year 1784; but before the close of the year, the Yorkers, found their property mostly confiscated, and themselves so harshly handled, by the civil and military authority of Vermont, that they either submitted and took the oath of allegiance to the state, or abandoned the country, and settled in other places. The greater part of them fled into the state of New York, and settled upon lands especially granted by that state for the benefit of these sufferers. This dispersion of her partisans from the county of Windham terminated the attempts of New York, to maintain her authority in Vermont by means of a military force; and although she did not readily acknowledge the independence of Vermont, she probably, from this period, relinquished all hope of overthrowing the government of Vermont, or of preventing the final acknowledgement of her independence by Congress.

SECTION IV.

Settlement of the Controversy with New York, and the Admission of Vermont into the Union.

1. On the 20th of January, 1783, the preliminary articles of peace were signed, which terminated the war with Great Britain, and established the independence of the united colonies. By this event, Congress was freed from their embarrassments with regard to Vermont, and Vermont was released from all her fears. The British army upon the northern frontiers of Vermont, whose efforts had been so long palsied by the artful policy of few individuals, was now withdrawn, and the people of Vermont, having now no external foes to dread, ceased to be solicitous for an immediate union with the confederated states. They observed that the Congress of the United States was becoming embarrassed in their proceedings—that their currency had failed—their revenue was dried up—their armies unpaid and dissatisfied—their credit gone—and the confidence of the people in their wisdom and ability, nearly destroyed.

2. Vermont, on the other hand, in consequence of being refused admission into the union, found herself freed from all these difficulties. The United States had incurred an immense debt in the prosecution of the war, but the calls of Congress upon the people for money to pay this debt, could not reach into Vermont. Vermont, it is true, was obliged to pay the forces, which she had raised for her own defence, but these had been few, as she had, during much of the war relied for safety more upon her policy, than her power. As much of the territory of Vermont was at this time ungranted, and at the disposal of the government, and as numerous applications were now made for these lands by settlers, who

were flocking in from other states; Vermont was thereby enabled to supply her own treasury and to pay her debts without imposing oppressive taxes upon the people.

3. Thus, by one of those sudden transactions, which are not uncommon in human affairs, was Vermont brought from a condition the most difficult and embarrassed, to a state of safety and happiness exceeding that of any of her neighbors. Invited by the mildness of the government, the comparative exemption from taxes, the fertility and cheapness of the lands, large additions were annually made to the population, and resources of Vermont by emigrants from other states. The government had attained an efficient organization—had learned wisdom from past experience—the people were contented and happy under it—and as they felt that their own situation was better than that of the people of the neighboring states, they felt no longer any solicitude to be admitted into the confederation.

4. The affairs of Vermont remained in this situation for several years after the close of the war. During this period the leading statesmen and philanthropists in the United States became alarmed at the operation and tendency of public affairs. They perceived that the powers, with which Congress was invested, were wholly inadequate to the purposes of government and that a more solid and efficient organization was indispensable in order to secure that liberty and independence, which they had purchased with so much blood, and toil, and treasure. Therefore at the suggestion of James Madison of Virginia and in conformity with a resolution of Congress, a convention of delegates, from the several states assembled at Philadelphia in 1787, and after mature deliberation adopted a constitution, by which Congress should afterwards be furnished with powers adequate to the exigencies of the government. This constitution was ratified by the states and the first

Congress assembled under it on the 3d of March, 1789.

5. After the adoption of the federal constitution the policy and proceedings of the new Congress were carefully observed by the people of Vermont. During two sessions they found the government laboring to restore public confidence by providing for the payment of the public debts and by the establishment of equal law and justice in every department of the federal government. Their measures appeared to be marked with so much wisdom and prudence, as, in a great degree, to restore to the people of Vermont that confidence in the federal government, which had been destroyed by the evasive and vacillating policy of the old Congress, and to remove the aversion, which they had sometime felt, to a confederacy with the United States.

6. The ancient difficulty with New York, however, remained unsettled. That state well knew that Vermont would now remain a free and independent state, and she probably felt but little anxiety that it should be otherwise. But the former governors of New York had made grants of large tracts in Vermont the validity of which, the government of Vermont refused to admit, and the grantees were constantly complaining to the government of New York, of the injuries done them in not being permitted to take possession of their property. New York did not conceive that she was under very strong obligation to refund what had been extorted for these grants by the cupidity of the royal governors of that province before the war, yet she manifested a disposition to compromise the matter and have the difficulties adjusted on amicable terms.

7. Events also occurred in relation to the federal government, which disposed New York still more, to admit the independence of Vermont, and to wish her confederation with the United States. It was perceived that by the exclusion of Vermont, the eastern

states were deprived of their just representation in Congress, and New York could not but see, that, if their old difficulties could be settled, the interests and influence of Vermont would in almost every instance coincide with her own. It therefore soon became apparent that public sentiment in N. Y. was in favor of a reconciliation. Vermont, it was said, is in full possession of independence; her government is as well organized and administered, as that of the other states; and shall a controversy, which originated in the cupidity and oppression of royal governors and councils, whose authority has long been extinct, be permitted to mar the constellation of America and deprive the north of its just weight in the council of the nation?

8. In accordance with these conciliatory views, the legislature of New York, on the 15th of July, 1789, passed an act, appointing commissioners with full powers to acknowledge the sovereignty of Vermont, and adjust all matters of controversy with that state. On the 23d of October following, the legislature of Vermont appointed commissioners on their part to treat with those of New York, and to remove all obstructions to the admission of Vermont into the union. The commissioners on both parts were very anxious that an adjustment should be effected, and the only point, which occasioned any debate, was the amount of compensation, which claimants under New York grants should receive from Vermont, an account of her having regranted the same lands and excluded the New York grantees from their possession. But the settlement of this point, after two or three meetings, was amicably agreed upon by the commissioners.

9. On the 7th of October, 1790. "the commissioners for New York, by virtue of the powers to them granted for that purpose, declared the consent of the legislature of New York, that the state of Vermont be admitted into the union of the United States of America; and that immediately upon such admission,

all claims of jurisdiction of the state of New York, within the state of Vermont, shall cease; and thenceforth the perpetual boundary line between the state of Vermont shall be as was then holden and possessed by Vermont," that is, the west lines of the most western towns which had been granted by New Hampshire, and the middle channel of Lake Champlain.

10. With regard to the lands which had been granted by New York, "the said commissioners by virtue of the powers to them granted, declare the will of the legislature of New York, that if the legislature of the state of Vermont should, on or before the first day of January, 1792, declare that on or before the first day of June, 1794, the state of Vermont would pay the state of New York, the sum of thirty thousand dollars, that immediately from such declaration by the legislature of the state of Vermont, all rights and titles to lands within the state of Vermont, under grants from the government of the colony of New York, or from the state of New York, should cease," those excepted, which had been made in confirmation of the grants of New Hampshire.

11. This proposal and declaration being laid before the legislature of Vermont, they very readily agreed to the plan, which had been concerted by the commissioners from both states; and on October 28, 1790, passed an act directing the treasurer of the state, to pay the sum of thirty thousand dollars to the state of N. Y. at the time proposed; adopting the west line above mentioned as the perpetual boundary between the two states; and declaring all the grants, charters and patents of land, lying within the state of Vermont, made by or under the late colony of New York, to be null and void, those only excepted which had been made in confirmation of the grants from New Hampshire.

12. Thus was terminated a controversy which had

been carried on with great spirit and animosity for twenty six years; and which, had, on the part of Vermont called into exercise native courage and talents, which have few parallels in ancient or modern times. The difficulties with New York, being adjusted, the legislature of Vermont, proceeded to call a convention for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the people with regard to an union with the United States. This convention assembled at Bennington on the 6th day of January, 1791, and after deliberating and debating the subject for four days, it was finally voted, yeas 105, and nays 2, that application be made for admission into the federal union; and the convention was then dissolved.

13. On the 10th of January, 1791, the legislature of Vermont, met at Bennington, and on the 18th, they chose the Hon. Nathaniel Chapman, and Lewis R. Morris Esq. commissioners to attend Congress and negotiate the admission of Vermont, into the union. These commissioners immediately repaired to Philadelphia, and laid before the president the proceedings of the convention and legislature of Vermont; and on the 18th of February, 1791, Congress passed an act which declared "that on the 4th day of March, 1791, the said state by the name and style of "the state of Vermont," shall be received and admitted into their union, as a new and entire member of the United States of America." This act was passed without debate, and without a dissenting vote, and by it were terminated all the controversies with regard to Vermont.