Hon. Mr. GERRY's Objections to signing the National Constitution

NEW YORK, 10th October 1787.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to inclose, pursuant to my commission, the constitution proposed by the Federal Convention.

To this I say, I gave my first, and shall submit my objections to the honourable Legislature, and report to Congress and the several Legislatures such alterations and provisions as shall render the Federal Constitution adequate to the exigencies of government. I think the powers extended to the formation of the general government, and those powers, which shall be vested in the several States, in the manner proposed, are adequate to the exigencies of government and preservation of liberty.

The question on this plan involves others of the highest importance. Whether or not the amendments proposed by the federal government are adequate to the exigencies of the federal government is a question that the several State Governments shall be at liberty to adopt. If those who are in favour of the Convention, as well as those who are against it, should prefer moderation, their amendments may afford much information and finally direct to a happy issue.

It may be urged by some that an explicit confidence should be placed in the Convention. But, however respectable the members may be, the Convention, in every respect, must be admitted to be unanswerable. To them are confided the laws which determine the liberty and property of men, and it is evident that they cannot be prejudiced in their decisions; that the subject is well understood, and that the Convention, after having thrown it into the several States, if those who are in favour of the Convention, as well as those who are against it, should prefer moderation, their amendments may afford much information and finally direct to a happy issue.

"Others may suppose, that the Convention may be exceeded, because they have power to amend. But cannot this effect be better attained before a ratification, than after it? And shall a people adopt a form of government, under conviction that it is an amendment?"

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, with the highest respect, your most obedient, and humble servant,

E. G. R. E.

The Hon. SAMUEL ADAMS, Esq.,
President of the Senate.

And the Hon. JAMES WARREN, Esq.,
Speaker of the House of Representatives of Massachusetts.