

Monday, January 16.

Mr. Dwight Foster, from the committee of claims, made reports on the petitions of Frederick Epler and Andrew Dunlan, which were against the petitioners. The first was concurred in by the house; the last was ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. New moved that the petition of James Garner, legatee and administrator of James Mercer, should be referred to the committee on the land-office business. Agreed.

Mr. Ames moved a resolution to the following effect, viz: "That the committee of commerce and manufactures be directed to enquire whether it would not be expedient for the better security of navigation, to place a number of Buoys within and near the harbour of Boston, and report by bill or otherwise." Agreed to.

Mr. Havens presented a petition from the collector of customs and revenue for Sag-Harbour (Long-Island) praying for an increase of salary.

Mr. Sherborne presented also a petition from Jeremiah Libby, Postmaster of Portsmouth (N. H.) to the same effect; both of which were referred to the committee of commerce and manufactures.

Mr. Milledge presented a petition from William Matthews, clerk to the commissary of the state of Georgia, for compensation. Referred to the committee of claims.

Mr. W. Smith, from the committee of ways and means, made a report on the subject of appropriations, which was twice read and committed to a committee of the whole.

Mr. Harper laid a resolution on the table, directing the secretary of the treasury to lay at stated periods certain statements of duties and drawbacks, before the house.

Mr. W. Smith said the attorney-general had been directed to make a report to congress in March 1795, relative to a claim of the State of Georgia to certain lands, which had never been made to that house, but to the Senate only. He said the land in question was of great extent and value, and some measure ought to be taken on the subject. He therefore proposed that a message should be sent to the attorney-general for a copy of that report. Agreed.

Mr. Malbone said he found it inconvenient to attend both the committee of commerce and manufactures and the committee of claims, and desired to be excused from attending upon the committee of claims. He was excused, and his colleague Mr. Potter was appointed.

In committee of the whole, Mr. Dent in the chair, on the report of the committee of ways and means, on the subject of a land tax.

Mr. Henderfon. Mr. Chairman, I am very sensible that our present revenue system is not sufficiently productive, to answer the exigencies of government, and that it is necessary, during the present session, to adopt some measures to improve it. This, I believe, will be admitted by all, and the only question is, as to the mode by which it shall be accomplished.

Two modes of obtaining an increase of revenue, are contemplated. The one, by extending the present system of indirect taxation, as far as prudence will admit—the other, by having recourse to direct taxation.

Upon taking a comparative view of the two different modes, the advantages that appear to my mind, to arise out of, and flow from the first, have so much the preponderance, that I cannot give my assent to the adoption of the other, until the improvement of the system of individual taxation has been fairly tried, and shall prove insufficient to meet the necessary expenditures of government.

Sir, I will take the liberty to enumerate a few of the advantages that the present system possesses, which cannot be attached to the new one. This system has been organized, for a considerable length of time, and the citizens have got accustomed to, and are generally well satisfied with it. It can be extended without any change in the system, or perhaps the appointment of one new officer. It will occasion the least possible expense in the collection. It is the most easy and agreeable mode of raising revenue from our citizens, in the power of government to adopt. They pay the tax voluntarily and imperceptibly; they have an option to consume much, or little; and in proportion to their consumption, will be their contribution to the revenue.

Sir, the revenue arising from this system, has been in a state of progression ever since the system was got into operation, and I trust may be preferred to that state. It has, I believe, answered the most sanguine expectation of its promoters, and I have very little doubt on my mind, but that it would have met all the common exigencies of government, if there had not, of late, arisen some very extraordinary and heavy expenses, which greatly augmented our public debt.

Sir, with regard to the system of direct taxation, almost every member who has advocated the measure, acknowledges that it will be attended with considerable embarrassment, and I believe the opinion to be well founded. Great innovations upon systems of taxation, are generally embarrassing. It is to us unexplored ground. The drawing of revenue, by coercion, from our citizens, appears to me one of the most delicate and difficult subjects government can engage in. Besides the danger of increasing the excitement of the public mind, and of alienating the affections of our citizens from the present government, I think that the difficulty of levying a land tax upon principles of equal justice (a principle that ought always to be kept in view) will be almost insuperable. This sentiment was so fully and ably discussed by the member from South-Carolina, who was last up on the subject, that there is little room for any further remarks upon it. I will proceed to observe, that this system will require an entire new organization, which cannot be carried into operation short of a very heavy expense, and the earliest probable time that it will afford aid to our revenue will be considerably remote. With regard to the expenses of the system, the secretary of the treasury appears to have been sensible that the collection of taxes in this way would be very expensive, as will appear by a statement in his report upon the system. In that report, he reports the sum of 1,484,000 dollars to the several States, from which he deducts for abatements, erroneous assessments, and charges of collection, fifteen per cent. amounting to 222,600 dollars, leaving the net proceeds of the tax 1,262,400 dollars, an

expense vastly exceeding the expenses of collection under the present system, a view of which I will attempt to exhibit, as contained in the last statement of the secretary of the treasury, showing the amount of duties upon imports, tonnage, &c. The net proceeds are stated at 7,959,409; 70 dollars, and the expenses of collection are stated at 260,359; 21 dollars, making between three and an half and four per centum. The difference will be as 15 to 334, or at most to 4.

Sir, with regard to the expenses of collection, I would ask, if any member would want a moment's time to determine which is the preferable system? I apprehend not.

Sir, the gentleman from Pennsylvania, who was first upon this subject, regretted exceedingly that a system of direct taxation had not been adopted long since by government. For my part, I differ very much in opinion from that gentleman on this point, and I can say, that instead of regretting, I rejoice that such a system has not yet been adopted, and have full confidence that the measures of government will not be paralyed, as that gentleman seems to think, if it should be further postponed. That gentleman is engaged in the commercial line, I am in the agricultural line, which, perhaps, may account for our great difference in opinion upon this point. However consonant it may be to the feelings and interests of the commercial part of our citizens, to have the revenue raised in this way, sure I am, that the gentleman, with all the force of eloquence and reasoning that he is possessed of, will never be able to convince the great body of the yeomanry of this country, that it will be more for their interests to collect the revenue at the expense of 15 per cent. than at the expense of 3 or 4 per cent.

Sir, it appears that the gentleman from Pennsylvania has it in contemplation, to throw the whole burthen of government upon the farmer. If I recollect right, his words were these—"The wealth of the country must have become so considerable, from the high price which every agricultural production had long been at, as to enable them very well to support the expenses of government." With regard to which, I would observe that under the present system, in my opinion, the farmer generally bears an equitable proportion of the expenses of government. There may be some few exceptions, as it is impossible that any revenue system can be established that will operate equally in proportion to wealth upon every citizen and it would be highly impolitic to lay the whole burthen of the revenue upon any one particular class or description of citizens, but the surest policy, is to let both agricultural and commercial bear their parts as they now do.

The gentleman farther observed, "that if peace was made between the nations at war, he had no doubt, but there would be a defalcation of the revenue." He offered no reason to support his opinion, and as I am of different opinion, I will, in a few words offer the reasons why I think our revenue, instead of meeting with any considerable shock from that event, (so ardently to be wished for by every humane mind, by every true American) will be improved. Commerce depends chiefly upon wealth and population. If peace should take place, our wealth and population will progress very fast. I think we may reasonably calculate upon a larger ratio of wealth and population emigrating from all parts of Europe to America. In proportion to the increase thereof will be the demand for, and consumption of imported articles. Our commerce will not only be continued with the old, but be extended to new markets, which will of course, increase the quantity of imports and tonnage, and in proportion as they are increased, will our revenues be augmented.

The gentleman observed that, with respect to excise, he need not say how unproductive it had been. The article of snuff, instead of producing any thing, had brought the revenue in debt; and that the excise on another article, had called forth the military to enforce it. Sir, if the gentleman had attended to the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, speaking on the subject of internal revenue, he would not have made so unqualified an expression as to the product of the excise. The Secretary of the Treasury informs, that the product of the internal revenues for the present year will be considerable more than the year past, for the year past they were stated at between 300,000 and 400,000 dollars. With regard to the article of snuff, it is obvious to every one that this arose from the advantage that was taken of the law, but the law being suspended, there can be no further loss; and I think that when it shall be amended, we may count upon a net product hereafter from that article. With regard to the article that the gentleman alludes to, that the excise upon had called forth the military to enforce it, I would only remark, that it is now become certainly productive, and generally satisfactory, and as to the unhappy circumstance of the military being called forth, I believe that it was not owing to any inherent principle of the law, but much more to extraneous causes, which I shall not attempt to explain. The gentleman went on to observe that the augmentation of duties would not prove an augmentation of our revenue. I believe that opinion to be incorrect, and I think if the gentleman had attended to the final operations of our government, he would not have advanced it.—Sir, our duties have been repeatedly raised, and daily experience convinces us that our revenue has uniformly been in a state of progression.—Sir, the gentleman endeavoured to enforce his arguments by referring to the recommendations of the President of the United States upon the subject. For my part I would ever wish to pay all due respect to the recommendations of the President, as I sincerely believe that they are founded in wisdom and patriotism. But until the gentleman can change the phraseology of the President's recommendations upon the occasion, he cannot make the argument apply. The President has never in any communication that I have met with, conveyed the idea of a land tax being necessary, and I contend that we are as much complying with his recommendation by raising the revenue wanted in the one mode, as we would be in the other.

[To be Continued.]

MR. Pickering's Letter. This Day Published, AND FOR SALE BY THE EDITOR, Price three eighths of a Dollar. THE Letter of the Secretary of State, to Mr. Pinckney, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States, to the French Republic. February 4. 6t

PHILADELPHIA,

WEDNESDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 8, 1797.

Yesterday arrived here the brig Sulanna, Fitzpatrick from Bourdeaux, which place he left Dec. 1. By this arrival we learn that the brig Liberty, captain Ridge, in which Mr. Pinckney, our minister plenipotentiary to the republic of France, went passenger, had safely arrived there ten days before he sailed, and that Mr. Pinckney had proceeded immediately to Paris, but no information had been received in respect to his reception there. It was, however, the opinion of our consul, Mr. Fenwick, and others, at Bourdeaux, that Mr. Pinckney would be received by the directory.

Capt Fitzpatrick brought Paris papers to the 22d Nov. which are not so late as our Paris accounts by the British packet, which are to the 23d.

Of the number of unfortunate citizens who have suffered a grievous captivity in Algiers, sixty have returned to their country and friends in the ship arrived at Marcus Hook.

Yesterday a number of carriages were dispatched by order of government to convey them to the city.

Arrived at Marcus Hook, the ship Two Sisters, Henry, from Port-au-Prince, and ship Sally, Gelfon, from Honduras.

The Hope, Benbridge, is arrived at Bourdeaux, from Philadelphia.

ADDRESS

Of the Curé and Inhabitants of Detroit, together with the Officers, Civil and Military of the County of Wayne, in the Territory of the United States, north-west of the River Ohio.

To his Excellency ANTHONY WAYNE, Esq. Major General, and Commander in Chief of the Army of the United States.

SIR,

Your arrival at this Post, produced amongst us a general satisfaction—having learnt your sudden departure for Philadelphia, we would think ourselves deficient in our duty, were we not to offer you our sense of gratitude for all the favors we have received from you—we feel the honor you have conferred upon us, in permitting our country to be called by your name; and we embrace this opportunity to assure your Excellency that you have inspired us with those grateful sentiments which dutiful children entertain for the best of fathers—you have been an eye witness of our zeal and attachment to the Government of the United States; of our joy in becoming united to citizens, free and generous, we have not lost a moment in putting in operation both civil and military authorities, and adopting and obeying the laws established by government. We hope Sir, that you will be pleased to inform the President of the United States of our situation, that you will be our advocate, to interest him, in our favor. May you be blessed with a lucky passage across the Lake; enjoy a perfect health and receive from Government, the reward you are so justly entitled to for your great services, your successes, and your toils; and may the Almighty grant us the favor of seeing you here again, to complete the happiness of us all, is the sincere wish of—Your Excellency's most obedient, and very humble servants.

Signed by the Curé and others.

Detroit, Nov. 14, 1797.

To the Curé and Inhabitants of Detroit, and the Officers, Civil and Military of the County of Wayne.

GENTLEMEN,

I have received with much pleasure your polite address of this date, which not only demands my grateful acknowledgements for the flattering testimonials it contains of your esteem; but affords me an opportunity to remark with what pleasure I have observed the general satisfaction, which has appeared to prevail among the citizens of Detroit, and its neighborhood, upon the establishment of the government of the United States; and the alacrity and laudable desire they have evinced, to promote the due execution thereof: a conduct so wise, while it merits the warm regard of their fellow-citizens of the Union, must ensure to themselves all the advantages which will flow from and be the natural effect of the administration of good laws, under so happy a government.

I will with much pleasure, communicate to the President, the warm sentiments of zeal and attachment, which you have expressed towards the government of the United States; and I cannot permit myself to depart from hence, without assuring you, that I shall always take a peculiar interest in whatever may contribute to promote the happiness and prosperity of this country, to which my name has the honor to be attached.

I have the honor to be Gentlemen,

With much esteem,

Your most obedient,

And very humble Servant,

ANTY. WAYNE.

Head Quarters,

Detroit, 14th Nov. 1796.

Three full houses will surely have suggested to the managers, what was wanting at the theatre. They had probably been taught to know, by many thin ones—of what there was too much.

It is said that they have another novelty in store, but that it is retarded by some difficulty which has occurred in casting the characters. In the choice of rival candidates, it is to be hoped that some little consideration will be had for the public. If the managers have like Aecæda of old, the art of boiling down an old slinger to the youth and beauty of Mrs. Merry, let them let me see it. But if they will try how far the patience of the public may be counted on, they may unexpectedly find themselves at that point, at which its resentment will be dealt out to them by the measure of its past indulgence.

The courtesans of the European theatre are harsh. It is to be hoped they are not necessary.

S N U B.

Our readers have heard much of spies in our country, from foreign nations. The following is a literal extract from the report of the French committee of safety, on the interior state of the republic, March 6, 1794, by Barrere.

"We have agents in every part of Europe—we have agents even in America, from whom we learn the plots of the emigrants from the colonies and the envoys from the European courts."—"There is as it were an echo in Europe, and this echo repeats to the committee every political system adopted in Europe."

These confessions are very candid. The facts are perfectly in the character of the nation. Perhaps no nation on earth take the same pains and are equally successful, in worming out the secrets of other people. The following anecdotes are told in private circles.

When the negotiation of 1783 was pending, the British minister, Mr. Oswald, lost his papers containing his instructions. They were taken out of his bureau, the locked. Mr. Oswald told Mr. Jay his papers were gone, and asked him how he contrived to secure his papers. Mr. Jay replied, he kept them in a pocket within his coat, under his arm, and when he went to bed, he laid them under him. But says Mr. Jay, you need give yourself no uneasiness about the papers; the French minister has them doubtless and is taking copies—and when he has done this, the papers will be returned to their place. Accordingly, after two or three days, the papers were replaced in the bureau, and the bureau locked as usual.

What led Mr. Jay to his conclusion, was, a knowledge of similar tricks before. During the war, and while Mr. Jay was in Spain, a certain paper was sent by him to the secretary for foreign affairs in America. The paper arrived safe. Not long after, it was missing for several days, & then restored safely to its place. A few months after, and the first that Mr. Jay heard of it, the French minister in Spain showed him a copy of it. A clerk in the office of foreign affairs had been bribed, it was supposed, to obtain the paper for the French minister in Philadelphia, who copied it, sent back the original, and a copy to France; from whence it was sent to the French minister in Spain.

N. Y. Min.

New Theatre.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, February 8, Will be presented, (for the fourth time) an Historical Play, called

Columbus;

Or, A WORLD DISCOVERED. WITH NEW SCENERY, MACHINERY, DRESSES AND DECORATIONS.

The music composed by Mr. Reinagle.

The proscenium and Pageant by Mr. Byrne.

In this Play the manners and customs of Mexico and Peru characterize the first discovered nations of America. Such deviation from Historical truth was deemed necessary for dramatic effect, and has enabled the author to introduce the pathetic Tale of CORA AND ALONZO, from Marmontel's *Incas*.

The PROLOGUE will be spoken by Mr. WIGNELL, SPANISH PARTY.

Columbus, Mr. Cooper
Alonzo, Mr. Moreton
Harry Herbert, Mr. Wignell
Doctor Dolores, Mr. Harwood
Brisson, Mr. Francis
Roldan, Mr. Fox
Valverde, Mr. Darley
Molcho, Mr. Blisset
Captain, Mr. McDonald
1st Spaniard, Mr. Darley, jun.
2d Spaniard, Mr. Morgan

INDIANS.

Orozimbo, Mr. Warren
Solalco, Mr. L'Estrange
Catalpo, Mr. Warrell
Cuto, Mr. J. Warrell
Cora, Mrs. Merry
Nelti, Mrs. Francis
Priestesses of the Sun, Mrs. L'Estrange
Indian Women.—Mrs. Harvey, Mrs. Doobor, Miss Milbourne, Miss Oldfield, Miss L'Estrange, Miss Bates, Miss Anderson, and M'Elle Sophie.

In act 1. A PROCESSION OF INDIANS, and the first Landing of COLUMBUS.

In act 3. REPRESENTATION OF A STORM AND EARTHQUAKE, With a Grand Eruption from a Volcano.

In act 4. A MARCH OF SACRIFICE, and Procession to the Execution of CORA.

The whole to conclude with A GRAND PAGEANT.

The scene of the Volcano designed by J. Richards, Esq. R. A. principal Scene Painter to Covent-Garden Theatre.

The rest of the Scenery designed by Mr. Milbourne, and the whole executed by him and under his direction.

Machinist, Mr. Lenthall.

The dresses designed by Mr. Gibbons.

To which will be added,

A FARCE, called

Love à-la-Mode;

Or, THE HUMOURS OF THE TURE.

[Written by Charles Macklin, Esq.]

Sir Calaghan O'Brallaghan, Mr. Warren

Sir Archy M'Sarcasm, Mr. Bates

Squire Groom, Mr. Harwood

Beau Mordecai, Mr. Francis

Sir Theodore Goodchild, Mr. Warrell

Servant, Mr. Mitchell

Charlotte, Mrs. Harvey

The Public are respectfully informed, that the new comedy of The Way to get married is in preparation, and will be speedily brought forward; after which Columbus will necessarily be laid aside.

Box, One Dollar twenty-five cents. Pit Seven Eighths of a Dollar, and Gallery, half a dollar.

Tickets to be had at H. & P. Rice's Book-store, No. 50 High-street, and at the Office adjoining the Theatre.

Ladies and Gentlemen are requested to send their servants to keep places a quarter before 5 o'clock, and to order their seats, as soon as the company are seated, to withdraw, as they cannot on any account be permitted to remain.

The Doors of the Theatre will open at 5, and the Curtain rise precisely at 6 o'clock.

Places for the Boxes to be taken at the Office in the front of the theatre, from 10 till 2 o'clock, and from 10 till 4 on the days of performance.

WIVAT RESPUBLICA!

ALL PERSONS

INDEBTED to the Estate of the late DAVID KENNEDY, I require, either by note, bill, bond, book account, or otherwise, are requested to make immediate payment to the subscribers, without delay, and all persons having any just demands against said Estate, are desired so exhibit the same for adjustment.

ANN KENNEDY, Adm'r.

FRANCIS JOHNSTON, Adm'r.

Philadelphia, February 8