

On Friday last the House of Representatives of this Commonwealth waited on the President of the United States with the following Address:

To GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States.

The address of the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in general assembly met.

SIR, When we contemplate the near approach of your retirement from public to private life, as announced to your fellow-citizens, in your address of the 17th of September last; we should be wanting in duty to our own feelings, and those of our constituents, if we did not cordially embrace this last occasion, to join the grateful voice of the American Nation, in the acknowledgment of your long services and patriotic labors, in the achievement of our independence, and the establishment and maintenance of our peace, liberty and safety.

In the hour where we now deliberate, could we be silent, if they had utterance would testify for us that they beheld you seated in our first Congress, and, at their call, rising undaunted to lead our infant armies to victory or death, in the cause of liberty and our country. They beheld you again, after the issue of that perilous, but auspicious combat, seated in the same house, and presiding eminently illustrious, among the illustrious band of statesmen and patriots, who framed the present happy constitution of the Union.

We forbear, sir, a detail of your services, as well before, as since, the commencement of the revolution. Were we adequate to the task, it would fall more properly within the province of some future historian, who cannot be suspected of personal affection, or public prejudice.

It is our present duty only to express our grateful sense of your general services. Prudent, firm and magnanimous in war; never despairing of the public safety in the worst of times, nor elated by success in the best; confiding in, and confided by your country, to its greatest advantage; gloriously relinquishing your military character, when the great national purposes for which it was assumed, left you at liberty to seek your beloved retirement; and with equal glory, quitting that retirement, at the call of your country to execute its councils and commands in time of peace—the faithful guardian and intelligent organ of its laws; maintaining its freedom, asserting its honor and independence; and at last, when in your best judgment, without an abatement of love for your country, you conceived that the time was come, when you might be safely indulged in a final return to that retirement which your years and services merited: then bequeathing the fruits of your wisdom and experience in a farewell address, the maxims and precepts of which, we trust, will ever be regarded, as the richest legacy of a father to his children and latest posterity.

The same ardent affection which leads us, reluctantly, to acquiesce in your approaching retirement, commands our fervent wishes—that you may enjoy in this world the utmost felicity of your heart, in beholding the perpetual prosperity of our country, under a succession of wise and virtuous statesmen and rulers, animated by your example; and that when you are called from this world, you may be rewarded by the unbounded felicity of the world to come.

GEORGE LATIMER, Speaker.

To the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

GENTLEMEN,

The kindness of my fellow-citizens has given me frequent occasion to make my acknowledgments for their expressions of confidence, attachment and affection; and for the honorable testimonies that my public cares and labors have been useful to my country.

With great satisfaction I receive your additional testimony, that as a public man I have not lived in vain.

Though now seeking that repose which retirement and the tranquil pursuit of rural affairs are calculated to afford, and which my time of life requires, the love of my country will indeed suffer no abatement: its safety and prosperity will be essential to the enjoyment of my remaining years. And I confide in the discernment and patriotism of my fellow-citizens for the choice of wise and virtuous men, who will successfully administer every branch of the government to such members as under divine Providence, to insure the general happiness.

For your affectionate wishes for my present and future felicity, accept, Gentlemen, my cordial thanks.

G. WASHINGTON.

The following is extracted from a morning paper; it is therein given as part of the speech of Mr. Swanwick, and shews the present opinion of that gentleman, relative to the West-Indies.—He says, "the West-Indies where all government was retrograding into the state in which it stood a hundred years ago, where all men were converted into Buccaneers, blacks and whites, and all the intermediate shades; where governors from France were no sooner landed than they were reshipped as live lumber and sent back again."

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Thursday, January 19.

The House being in a committee of the whole on the subject of further revenue, Mr. Dent in the chair.

Mr. Swift said he had all along been opposed to a system of direct taxation, believing it possible to raise the revenue wanted from indirect sources, and determined never to have recourse to direct taxes, unless the situation of the country was such as to make it necessary to apply to that source.

He should still have continued his opposition to direct taxes, had it not been for information which he had received that the posture of foreign affairs was such, as to threaten the cutting off of our sources of revenue arising from foreign commerce. It was not necessary to go into a consideration of this matter. It was enough to say, that there was a probability of a part, a very considerable part of

our revenues arising from commerce being cut off. Under these circumstances it appeared necessary, to have recourse to such taxes as were not within the power of foreign nations to annoy; for this purpose, he believed it would be proper to enter upon a system of direct taxes. It was necessary, at least to begin to make the arrangements; and, if not ultimately requisite to be adopted, it might be laid aside; but he believed the situation of the country was such, as to make it proper for them to settle a plan for laying a direct tax. Upon this principle only, had he changed his opinion, and intended to vote for the resolution; but he thought before the resolution was agreed to, it should be amended.—The resolution, as it then stood, he said, went to the apportioning, "according to the last census, the following direct taxes." He did not believe it would be right to apportion a direct tax according to the last census; for when they attended to the increase of population in some States, and to the stationary situation of others, no one would say that such an apportionment would be right. In the States of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Delaware, and New Jersey, there had been but little increase; in all the other States the increase had been greater. They ought therefore to have recourse to a different mode. If they were to attend to the situation of two States in particular the injustice would appear clear. In the last census, Connecticut was estimated to contain 240,000 inhabitants, and New York 340,000. Since that time, he said, the State of Connecticut had increased very little, but the State of New York, was increased at least to 500,000 so that Connecticut had not more than 250,000, while New York had double the number. In the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, Connecticut was apportioned 99,000 dollars of the estimated tax, and New York 140,000; the latter being only about 40,000 dollars more than the former, though it contained double the number of inhabitants. He would therefore, move to strike out the words, "last census," and to insert, "according to their numbers."

He believed that no gentleman would deny the justice of the amendment. Some objection, perhaps, might be made against it on the ground of expense; but he believed he should be able to remove these objections. Before the tax could be laid, he said, there must be a valuation of property, and when regulations were made for that purpose, they might also be made for taking an enumeration of the inhabitants, in which case the expense would only be trifling, and therefore no objection could be urged on that ground, and the justice of the measure was evident, since no gentleman could approve of any plan which should charge two States in the ratio of 140 to 100, when their true ratio was as two to one. He hoped, therefore, the amendment would be adopted; and if so, he should have no objection to vote for the resolution.

Mr. Page wished the gentleman had not brought forward his amendment in the present stage of the business, as it would prove a clog upon the discussion of the merits of the question, as all arguments must now go merely to the propriety of adopting or rejecting the amendment; whereas, if the amendment was withdrawn for the present, and if the resolution was carried, the amendment was introduced in the house, the discussion would go on unembarrassed; and if the resolution was not agreed to, it would be unnecessary that any amendment should be then added to it. It had been said, that a tax on land was a reproach to a republican government; he wished an opportunity to be afforded of proving, that a direct tax on land was more consonant to republican purity than any other. He hoped the gentleman would withdraw his motion.

Mr. Madison said he thought the amendment a proper one; it went to generalize the proposition, by striking out the words proposed, and would render it appropriate to the time of the law going into effect. If the tax were to be apportioned according to numbers, it must be according to the numbers as last legally ascertained by census. If no new census were taken before the act took place, then the last must be the guide; but if a new census, then that must be the guide. For these reasons, he was in favour of the amendment.

Mr. W. Smith enquired if this question had not already been decided, by a motion made by the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Christie.) The Chairman said it was in the house and not in the committee of the whole that the former question had been brought forward.

Mr. W. Smith said he hoped the proposition would not be agreed to, because it would defeat the whole business; and he would chuse, if it were to be defeated, that it should be defeated directly and not indirectly. If it were the object of gentlemen to take a new census, it would effectually defeat the intention of the bill. He hoped therefore, they should not waste their time in the present discussion, but determine the question whether or not the principle should be agreed to.

Mr. Madison said he did not know to whom the gentleman referred when he said there seemed to be an intention of defeating the bill; he could assure him it was not his intention. He wished to give the proposition the fullest discussion, that the real disposition of the house might be known. The amendment, he said, would not have the effect that the gentleman supposed. If it was the intention of the legislature to have a new census, it might be taken in time; but he did not believe a new census would be taken; and, if not, the apportionment must be according to the last, because there would be no other rule; but, if there should be another who would say it ought not to be conformed to? If it could be really supposed that there was any intention to defeat the original proposition by this amendment, it certainly would not have his patronage.

Mr. Swift said he did not mean to embarrass the measure, but to facilitate it. He believed the objection he wished to remove would make the resolution more agreeable to a great many members who would object to vote for it in its present form. When the committee of ways and means brought in a bill, they would make such regulations as they thought proper; but if the resolution were to be agreed to in its present form, it would preclude all possibility of having a new census, if it should be found expedient.

Mr. Havens doubted whether the motion of the gentleman from Connecticut was strictly constitutional. He read an extract from the 3d section of the 1st article of the constitution, in these words, "The actual enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such manner as they shall by law direct;" and the 4th clause of the 9th section of the same article, "No capitation, or other direct tax, shall be laid, unless in proportion to the census or enumeration herein before directed to be taken." By these words, he said he understood, that direct taxes could not be levied, except according to a census to regulate the representation, which must be taken once in ten years.

Mr. S. Smith said this question had been decided in the house and he trusted it would again be rejected. He recollected when the last census was taken, it was attended with considerable difficulty. Many of the inhabitants in the country were Germans, and they were suspicious that some bad purpose was intended by the measure. In taking a new census, for the purpose of a tax they would hold out to the people a temptation to return their numbers less than they really were; whereas, when a census was taken for the purpose of ascertaining the number of representatives to which they were entitled, the people were interested to make their numbers as large as possible. Nor would it be possible to get at the full number of the people, when they were interested in withholding them. Indeed he should not be surprised, if a census should be taken for the purpose proposed, if it proved less than the former one. He gave his dissent to the proposition when it was before them in the house, and he saw no reason for changing his opinion.

Mr. Hallowell could hardly suppose the gentleman from New-York (Mr. Havens) serious, when he doubted the constitutionality of taking a new census. Great alterations must certainly have taken place in seven years; and he doubted not many would vote for the system of direct taxes, if it could be made to bear tolerably equal, but not otherwise.

Mr. Sewall said the amendment proposed, was merely a verbal one; for if a new census were to be taken before the act went into execution, the apportionment must be regulated by it, whether the words were struck out or not; and if a new one were not taken, the apportionment must be made by the old census. If a census were to be taken, he said, it must be returned and approved by Congress, before any tax could be apportioned by it. If representation and taxation were connected together, he should have no objection to a new census being taken; but the term of the census not having expired, if it was now necessary to apportion a tax, it must be according to the last census. The amendment, however, being only verbal, it could have no effect on the resolution.

Mr. Nicholas said, if he believed the amendment to be of the very harmless nature which his colleague (Mr. Madison) had supposed, he should not have noticed it; but he believed it was of a more serious nature, as it would cause a delay which might ruin the business, as no tax could be apportioned upon a census before it had gone into operation with respect to fixing the number of representatives. He believed they had the power of taking a census, but he thought it must be taken for the purpose of taxation and representation, and not for taxation alone.

Mr. Gilbert said, there could be no question more express and which would admit of less doubt, than that representation and taxation must go together. The constitution directed the census to be taken once in ten years, and when once taken, it must remain to govern until another was taken; but whenever another census should be taken, the tax must be apportioned by that. A new census, he said, could not operate upon a tax now agreed upon. Whether a new census should be taken before the appointed time was a different question and was not at that time before them.

Mr. Sitgreaves said, if the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. Swift) was sincere in his professions of not wishing to embarrass the proposition before them, he would withdraw his amendment; because, if it meant anything at all, it went at least to delay the business. It could not be denied that every direct tax must be apportioned according to the last census taken according to law; and if the gentleman's motion meant that the proposed tax should not be laid until a new census was taken, it would necessarily put off the business for several years. The gentleman seemed to think that a census could be taken for this purpose only; but, Mr. S. said, if he understood the constitution, on this subject, no direct tax could be apportioned but according to the census taken for the purpose of apportioning the representation. If a new census was taken, therefore, it must operate upon both. If this opinion was just, and he had no doubt of it, the motion went to the putting off a direct tax, until a new census should be taken. If this was not embarrassing the business, he did not understand the meaning of the term. He believed the last census which was taken was not carried into effect till two years afterwards, and if a new one were taken, it would probably take as long a time to bring it into action, so that to carry the motion would be in effect to put off the business for several years.

The gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Madison) tho't a new census would not be taken before the direct tax was laid; if so, the motion was useless. He hoped, therefore, the gentleman would withdraw his motion, and suffer them to meet this important question fully in the face.

Mr. Celt said if direct taxes were to be laid, he was not prepared to say whether the old, or a new census should be made use of; but, if the carrying of the present motion would remove one of the objections which was against the measure, he could see no reason why it ought not to pass. The resolution expressly laid the apportionment should be according to the last census; the present motion went to leave that undecided, to be determined hereafter whether the old or a new census should regulate the apportionment; he hoped, therefore, it would be adopted.

Mr. Madison said, if he had foreseen that the amendment proposed could have been supposed to embarrass the measure, he should not have seconded it; but he thought it could not have that effect. He would ask if there was a gentleman in favor of the proposition, who would not have agreed to it, if the words proposed to be struck out had not been in it? And if not, why object to the amendment? He did not think it likely that a new census would be taken; but he did not think it was necessary to prejudice that question. It was an object of detail, and might properly be determined upon hereafter. Without it the proposition would be more general. It would have the same operation in one form as in the other, and no gentleman could complain of having his intention of moving for a new census prevented by a pre-judgment of the question.

Mr. Gilbert believed the resolution amended as proposed, would not pledge the House to take a census,

and therefore the debate was more about words than substance.

Mr. Murray thought the debate on the present question a very trifling one, as the abstract principle was necessarily kept out of sight. If the amendment was agreed to, the apportionment must be made according to the last census, as a new census could not be taken for two years to come, many States having already elected their representatives; if the gentleman from Connecticut saw that the amendment would be useless, he trusted he would not insist upon its being decided upon.

Mr. Isaac Smith said, he thought they might get rid of all this debate very easily. He wished the question, whether they would lay direct taxes or not to be simply taken. If a direct tax was determined upon, the detail of the business could be settled afterwards. He would therefore propose, if in order, that the question should be put simply "Shall we lay a direct tax?"

(To be Continued.)

GAZETTE MARINE LIST.

PORT OF PHILADELPHIA, ARRIVED.

Ship Camilla, Williamson, N. York, 8 days  
Clothier, Gardiner, Demarara 23  
Elizabeth, Bray, Jamaica 34  
Brig Patty, Coffin, Boston 60  
Schooner Jay, Norton, do. 90  
Schr. Fanny, Veau, New Providence 11  
Sloop Harmony, Atkinson, Curacao 64

CLEARED.

Ship Liberty, Bray, Londonderry  
Schr. Lovely Lala, Gibbon, Charleston  
Sloop Polly, Murney, Baltimore

The brig Georgia Packet, from this port for the Mole, is taken by the French, and condemned at Port de Paix.

The letter bag of the ship America, Capt. Ewing, for Hamburg, will remain at the Post-Office until to-morrow afternoon.

NEW YORK, Feb. 18.—Yesterday the ship Sampson, captain Roach, arrived at this port from London, from whence she sailed in company with the Franklin, which arrived several days ago. Our papers by the Sampson are to the dates before received, viz. December 9.

By a letter from Cape Nichola Mole, received yesterday, we have an account of the arrival there of major general Simcoe, lately appointed governor of all the British acquisitions in the island of St. Domingo.

A letter from Cape Nichola Mole of 29th Jan. says—

The British will not suffer any vessels to enter Cape Francois. A ship bound there was ordered away, and is arrived here.

We hear by capt. Gardner from Demarara, that a party of Spaniards from Orpoko River had lately attacked and taken a post at Essequibo, garrisoned by English and Dutch troops.

NEW YORK, February 17.

ARRIVED.

Ship Sampson, Roach, London 66  
Brig Julia, Harrison, St Croix 15  
Prosper, Broad, Port-au Prince 23  
Schr. Polly, Winchester, St. Thomas's 5

Capt. Rice put into Mole St. Nicholas on the 24th Jan. in distress. Upon information lodged against him as having French property on board; the captain of the Queen of 98 guns, ordered his vessels unloaded and examined. Finding on examination the information to be ungrounded, he was loaded again and thoroughly caulked at the expense of the British government by the order of captain Dobson, of the Queen, and uniformly treated with the greatest politeness.

Capt. Rice left at Mole St. Nicholas 1st February; brig Amazon and ship Patena belonging to N. York; brig —, capt. Williams belonging to Say-Brook, and a number names unknown. From the Log-Book of the ship Sampson, capt. Roach, 66 days from London.

Jan. 13. Saw the wreck of a vessel to the westward, bore down to her, sent an officer and 5 men on board who found her deserted. She proved to be the Thetis brig of Boston, about 200 tons burthen, laden with slaves and plank, and had lost her masts and part of her rudder; part of her quarter boards and her larboard plank had stove in; filled with water nearly up to her lower deck beams; every thing was taken out of her excepting the cargo; the hatches were not broke open—lat. 32, 44, long. 49, 19, West.

Off Bermuda saw several wrecks of small vessels.

NEWBURYPORT, February 10.

Extract of a letter from Capt. Tobias Ham, of the ship Commerce, of this town, to his owners, dated Cape-Nichola-Mole, Jan. 1.

SIR,

I am very sorry to inform you of our sad misfortune on the 25th of last month, in lat. 21, 30, N. long. 71, W. we were captured by a French privateer, name unknown, at seven in the evening. After having fired two broadsides and forty muskets, which wounded your son, Mr. Watson, Backler and Joseph, but no ways dangerous. Mr. Frothingham and myself were kept on board the privateer until the morning, mean while they plundered us of beef, pork, bread, potatoes, spare rigging, canvas, blocks, &c. She mounted 12 sixes; we found two six pound shot on deck, and took 12 musket balls out of the mizen mast, several holes through the mizen and one through the cross-jack yard, taffrel rail shot away—it is impossible to tell the whole damage until the ship is discharged; they took your son, Mr. Watson, Jacobs, Henry and Lewy on board the privateer, and sent on board a prize maller and 5 sailors to take the ship into Cape-Francois—on the 29th we had the good fortune to see admiral Duckworth's squadron, which frightened them, so they took my yawl and left the ship, and told me to keep close to the wind, expecting the ships would not fetch the Cape, which they did not, but as soon as the boat left me I up helm, set the light sails, although almost under the guns of the fort. I bore down to the fleet, who brought me in here. I have noted a protest, but shall not have it extended until we arrive at Jamaica; where I expect to go with the first convoy. I don't think they can recover salvage for bringing me in, as the ship was not in the hands of the French, although every one tells me they can, but I shall get advice from your correspondent at Jamaica before I pay it.

Yours, &c. TOBIAS HAM.

N. B. They threatened to stab the mate, who tried to stop them from robbing the vessel, and told the sailors that they would kill me if I told the commandant about their firing upon the ship, or if I detected a wrong course.