

"and twisted, and tumbled and whirled about with every wind, you might as well have no helm at all. If the ship is to be managed in this fashion, she will never reach her port but must founder or be wrecked. In a stormy season, do you want a weathercock for a public ship? Of what possible use would it be in a gale? At such a time, a good helmsman is what you want and what you should have. But as to a weathercock, what seaman or what merchant or what any body else before was ever so cured with folly as to believe that a ship wants one? Place your weathercock over a brewery, or over a distillery, or sell it for old brass, or give it away to some tinker, or do with it any thing else, or nothing at all—but don't have it stuck up a-board the ship!"

These sailors, however, are a queer sort of men. When they have followed the seas for a long time and become familiar with every fall, and every piece of rigging, and every rope, and every block and have weathered many a storm, and become acquainted with the different currents and soundings and head-lands, they affect to believe that persons who have never been on salt water are not qualified to instruct them in seamanship. As to the whole of your full-blooded American seamen, I don't remember to have seen one of them who deserved to be called a genuine, first-rate, metaphysical, cosmopolitan, French philosopher, not one who knew even the longitude and latitude of the Salines which used to be so fatal to the vast cubic volume of the Mammoth.

Again, therefore, I say, these same seamen are a queer sort of men. One of them would give away half his tobacco and half his grog-stuff for the sake of an old friend; and, in case of need, would perhaps give away all his money to help his friend cheerily on his way. If you should trust one of them with a little child, who perhaps would never do him any good, and that child should be in danger, one of these very feamen, instead of taking care of himself by running off alone, would rather expose himself to save the child, and would fight and perhaps be killed for its protection. Have not several of these same feamen, who were proud of having a good ship under foot and of doing well for their owners, stood to quarters when of inferior force, and been shot at by French corsairs? and, what is worse yet, have not they fought back again and let out streams of French purple, and beaten off the rare friends and allies, and come into port with colours flying, and as proud as if they were American heroes? Now, whether all this sort of thing, whether all this notion of generosity and self-exposure, and this fashion of fighting and beating the fraternally plundering French spouters of liberty and equality, whether all this sort of thing, I say, does not prove them a parcel of fools and saucy fellows? Is the question, which, with all due submission, I propose to have referred to the distinguished secretary as sole arbiter. Yet, after all, there seems to be reason in some of the notions of these same old feamen, queer as they are; and, after what I have said about them, I am yet willing to acknowledge, if it is partly agreeing with them, that I do not see much use for a weathercock a-board ship. Suppose, however, that on this point, we should also take the opinion of the distinguished secretary! He avows and avows it in the newspaper too, that the weathercock is the thing for him. And is not he a knowing man? Let this item, then, be laid out of the account for the present!

With the observations already made, so far as respects the main question now pending about a governor, might we take leave of the greater part of the preceding objections which have been publicly circulated against the chief justice M'Kean. The consideration of his being a notorious weathercock in the political world, is the only one of them which is further proposed to be directly insisted on. A reason for not laying this wholly aside is, that from this fact an argument may arise in support of an objection which is yet to be stated. The objection is of a nature which should be decisive with gentlemen of reputation, decisive with elders of honest hearts and independent minds, whatever may have been the place of their birth, whatever may be their religious creed, whatever may be their general sentiments on national politics. It is an objection which applies directly to the honor and the interests of Pennsylvania in particular. The charge is especially important as relative to the office of governor. If it is clearly supportable, as I think it is, against Thomas M'Kean, his advocates may place to his credit as many precious items as they dare flatter and may estimate them at any value within the utmost latitude of decency; the establishment of this charge, after all the credits which a partial friendship may bring forward in his favor, must, on a fair adjustment of the whole account, irretrievably doom him to political bankruptcy.

Were it not related to this charge, therefore, the item about the weathercock might now be disregarded, if any use, bearing any tolerable proportion to the expense, could be found for a weathercock on board a public ship. But where shall it be placed, or what shall be done with it after it is a-board? It will not answer to have it placed at the royal-mast-head, or on the round-house, or on the quarter-deck, or on the fore-castle. It is not fit to be in the cabin. It is worse than nothing at the wheel. What then shall be done with it? Must it be thrown over-board before the end of the cruise? Or shall it be stowed away in the hospital room? Or shall it be headed up in an empty wine cask or rum puncheon? Or shall it be tumbled below for all hands to do with it as they please? Throw down to them, however, such a thing as a weathercock a-board ship! and now stand by to see what becomes of the brainless chancier! It flies like feathers in a whirlwind. Neither of these plans, therefore, is quite satisfactory. I think of one

thing more which looks a little feasible and seems as if a weathercock might be turned to some account on board a public ship. It is, to cut up the weathercock for flaps to cover the vent holes of the cannon. But, on a moment's reflection, it is clear, that a sheet of lead would be much cheaper and much better. This, then, is a difficulty which might puzzle almost any of the Philadelphia lawyers who have only such common minds as Tilghman or Rawle. But the big mind of Dallas is different from theirs. He says, the weathercock is the very thing. Let him, therefore, point out its use for the ship! You can do many things, Mr. Dallas: But can you do this?

What, however, is this charge which is yet to be brought forward in objection to M'Kean's being governor?—I answer, It is a charge, for which no talent, no knowledge, no past service, no respect for moral or religious principle, ought to be admitted as a political compensation. It is a frailty of pernicious energy, which may render all a man's other qualities useless or worse than useless for the public service. In a political view, it has the mischievous activity of artful vice and the weakness without the innocence of folly. It may render talent and knowledge and office impotent to good but powerful for evil. The frailty is more fatally destructive in a chief magistrate than in any other civil officer. In him, without producing that marked sensation which points at folly the steady finger of general contempt, without exciting that impetuous indignation which drags to punishment public vice, it may be followed by evils rivalling those of vice and folly united. Although the characteristic frailty to which I refer is so fatally mischievous in a public man, and especially in a chief magistrate, it is a frailty which no law can reach or adequately chastise except the law of public opinion. It is an excessive vanity which sacrifices personal honor and public duty.

That the remarks as to this particular may be the better apprehended, permit me to mention one of Aesop's fables, the moral of which is so plain, that it may be felt and understood by a child! It is that of the crow and the fox. The substance of the fable may be stated thus—"An hungry fox, passing under a tree, heard a ruffling over his head, and, looking up, saw a crow on one of the topmost branches. A favourite morsel, which the crow was holding within his beak, instantly caught the eye, and sharpened the appetite of the fox. This fox was an old one; and had been so much in the world, that he knew the observations commonly made about the crow. "To steal the piece of food out of the mouth of the crow when raised so high above all ordinary reach, was the thing for the hungry old fox to desire and attempt. "There was one frailty which characterized the crow. The fox knew it well; and the lynx-eye of his nature, aided by practice, has resolved to take advantage of this frailty, for accomplishing his object. The conversation being introduced by his complimentary wishes of health and happiness to the crow, the fox goes on to accuse the common fame as a liar, and subjoins, by way of proof, that he has at length the personal satisfaction of knowing, from the evidence of his own senses, in opposition to common fame, that the beauties of the crow are of superlative elegance and whiteness. Finding this flattery acceptable, the fox expresses his high admiration of good singing, and, in a style of profound respect, intimates a wish to be personally satisfied whether the crow excels in charms of voice as much as in other accomplishments. Open gapes the crow's mouth to sing. Out drops the favorite piece, and is in the mouth of the fox, who turns up an eye, laughs at the crow, and trotting off with his prize, has left the silly thing to feel the reproach and the loss occasioned by vanity."

If Thomas M'Kean is raised to the elevated situation of governor, he will be the ruffling political crow of Pennsylvania; and his favorites of the moment will be interested flatterers. The parasites are the foxes, to slich from his vanity whatever is precious within his public power; and the public honor and treasure will be their sport and their prey.

Can this be denied? Where is the man who will say, that excessive vanity is not a characteristic frailty of the honorable Thomas M'Kean, Esquire? Whence is it that he, the chief justice of Pennsylvania, has so far disregarded his personal honor as to become notoriously a political weathercock, except from that excessive vanity which prefers the language of flattery and the glittering tinsel of office, to the manly consciousness of merited approbation?

Ask judges and lawyers and jurors and witnesses and suitors and spectators, respecting his demeanor on the bench! Will they not attest, that decisions have been obtained from his vanity; which could never have been obtained by solely addressing his integrity as a man, or his impartiality as a judge? Yet if there be on earth a situation where man should not permit the semblance of flattery to approach his soul, is it not when he appears on the bench as the presiding minister, as the chief priest, in the temple of justice? Ask, if Thomas M'Kean, high and honorable as he is, when appearing under this venerable character, has not permitted himself to be addressed in terms of the most obvious adulation? Ask, what has been the effect! Ask, if he has not decided the point for the flattering advocate without once hearing the opposite party in reply!

In smaller questions, smaller praise may suffice him. His vanity is tickled; his mouth opens; and out drops his judgment. More important questions may require more deliberate arrangement. Ask, however if it is not uniformly the case that, when the subject of his own admired self is covertly introduced, and gradually displayed,

he will eventually relish flattery whose palpable grossness is as disgusting to others as it is grateful to himself! Ask, if he will not thus relish his own praises when he should forget himself and attend solely to the cause before him that he might judge righteous judgment! Ask, if, at such times and in such places, the utmost profusion of flattery, poured forth upon the great Thomas M'Kean, like an inundation, tumbled in cascades over a mountain of flint, has not been borne with unmoved composure!

Mark this same chief justice, displaying himself in the walks of private life! There, is it not one of the easiest of human efforts to make him speak his own praise? Ask those who know him, if, when invited and uninvited by the turn of conversation, he will not dwell on the darling theme until his nearer feel for him those blushes to which his self-admiration is a stranger! Mention in his presence events in which he is known to have had some part, and ask about the importance of the scene in which he acted! Will he then be silent in his own praise? Intimate the number of places which he has at any time held, and enquire if the weight of multiplied business was not oppressive! Ask about his conduct as a military officer during the war of the revolution, and about general Washington's conversations with him or about him? Ask about his having been in Congress, and about the difficulties of past times! Will he not instantly fly at the lure, and devour his own fame?

It is not from a wish to detract from the reputation due to his public services, whatever they may in truth have been, that he is now charged with an excessive vanity, so incompatible with public duty and with personal honor. May my arm fall from the shoulder, may my tongue be paralyzed, and shame burn my cheek to cinder, sooner than I be disposed to deny the need of a great name to the great men who, during the revolution, did many great and worthy deeds for our nation! At the name of Washington and of great men like him, what American does not bow in respectful gratitude for their eminent achievements of patriotism? But where is the American who will presume to flatter the commander in chief of the patriot army of the revolution? Show me the man who dare adventure on the experiment of making that accomplished gentleman and hero speak his own various services, and depict himself as the sole hero of the tale!

Most assuredly, I have not intended to cast reproach on the military leader of the American revolution in mentioning his name so near to that of the honorable Thomas M'Kean, Esquire, and speaking of the general in chief of the American army, as completely contrasted to the chief justice of Pennsylvania. As to this sort of great man, this chieftain on the bench, legally honorable as he is, ask those who now support his vain pretensions to the chief magistracy, whether they have not done so, and whether they are not at present doing so, against their own individual judgment! Ask, whether they have not submitted to this proceeding, against their own personal choice, because he insisted on being crowded forward as the candidate for the chair of government, and because also they knew his obstinate and unforgiving and vindictive vanity, and thus knew that he would exert against them, with his utmost energies, all his powers and all his resources of influence, if they did not submit to his overbearing wishes for office!

The evidence of this unequivocal charge might doubtless be stated in detail. But is this procedure necessary to establish it? Let application be made to any man of any party who is a person of observation and has had an opportunity of knowing the chief justice of Pennsylvania! Is there to be found among them all one man of tolerable pretensions to reputation who will have the face to deny, that, of all the public men in the commonwealth, this chief justice is one of the most excessively vain?

This charge, then, of excessive vanity, is too true to be denied, too notoriously true to be evaded.

Let it not, however, be imagined that the present observations are meant to convey the idea that even the honorable Thomas M'Kean, Esq. may be acceptably flattered at all times and in all places, and upon all subjects! This would be too much for the utmost capacity of human vanity. After all his praises of himself, Thomas M'Kean is still but a frail human creature. The flattery, which is expected to be well relished by this frail being, should have in it something like speciousness and something like regard to incidental situation. If you wish, at some favourable time and in some favourable place, to make an experiment upon him, praise him, if you please for personal beauty, for elegance of manners, for celebrity as a lawyer, for general cleverness at various employments! praise him for military genius, for extent and profundity of legal knowledge, for general science, for political skill, for multiplicity of public trusts, for magnitude of public services! Praise him, if you please, for almost any thing and every thing which can be thought desirable and praiseworthy, except the dignified decorum with which he supports his personal authority in his own family! In a favourable moment of sunshine, the glossy stiffness of the crow might be praised as emulating the delicate beauties, the elegant contours, of the swan. The crow too might be flattered for imagined claims of a real voice. But this praising the crow for a fine singer, was doubtless bad enough. To praise a certain very praiseworthy personage for the superlative excellence of domestic government, might be thought too bad. Such flattery might be pronounced, like his vanity, too gross and palpable to sense. It might be doubted whether his repository for flattery, even if its digestive powers rivalled those of the Ostrich, would digest such extraordinary food as this would be. It would

be like desiring a man to swallow a loaded little pistol with a spring-trigger, while you held a flinten cord to fire it off within his stomach. No! I think, the man, whoever he might be, would not be silly enough to take such a thing down with his eyes open and with his usual senses about him. Before agreeing to it, his eyes must be sealed and he must take a different enemy into his mouth to steal away his understanding.

Some praise may be too outrageous to be relished even in fable. In general, it might be thought carrying matters very far indeed, to praise a Crow as equalling the Eagle of the western mountains in elevation and force of character. This might be too much for moral fable; but, to subvert the cause of their inconceivable patriotism; some of the old dealers in political fiction, after giving their consciences a parting kick, might say, that it ought to pass not only as possible but as absolute truth. It would, however be carrying flattery to an extreme too inadmissible for moral and political fable, to represent a crow as rivaling the elephant in the carrying of imperial power. Or to put the case so as to explain the idea yet more clearly—it would be outrageous, to say, that a crow placed in the chair of state in Pennsylvania would rival, in personal authority, the famous Aurengzebe borne aloft on his war-elephant and contending for empire in the plains of Hindoustan.

To say this of the honorable Thomas M'Kean and to the honorable Thomas M'Kean in proper person, might embarrass the high-toll front of the exotic secretary as well as the circumlocutory gentleness of the calculating Pilot. To save their embarrassment, therefore, let it be waved, although it is plain to common sense that a man who has not capacity for government is not fit for a Governor!

Shall, then, the honorable Thomas M'Kean Esquire be the governor of Pennsylvania? The charge of excessive vanity being clearly fastened upon him, what would be the effects of this characteristic frailty under his administration? The character of Pennsylvania abroad, its internal honor, and particular interests, all are concerned in the event.

What's the name of that open-mouthed crow who governs Pennsylvania? is a question, which no man who values the general reputation of the state would wish to have asked by strangers who might know the character, without knowing the person, of the governor. If you would avoid the public reproach of such a question—Beware of choosing the Crow to govern.

Considerations, however, far more interesting to Pennsylvania are involved in the choice of a Governor. Among the numerous civil and military appointments which may for years depend on that magistrate, what will be the consequence if the appointments are to be conferred on parasites and the friends of parasites? Where are the men of exalted honor, where are the men of talent, where are the men of virtue, where in a word are the men eminently qualified for public business who would submit or desire their friends to submit to the base compliances which would secure appointments under such a system of favoritism? If men thus capable of advancing the public interests, if men thus meriting the public confidence, if men thus formed to benefit and honor their country, are to be excluded from the Governor's appointments, in what hands is the vain man to place the affairs of the state? Will not appointments obtained by dishonorable means, by parasitical arts, be also converted to dishonorable purposes? Shall lips of falsehood and tongues of deceit be characteristic of your public officers? And will not their hands be as polluted as their lips, as fraudulent as their tongues? Would not such be the consequence of such a system of parasitical favoritism?

But if you are willing to discard from office whatever is honorable, whatever is manly, whatever is dignified, if you are willing to discard all those qualities which fortify and adorn the independent spirit of virtue, are you also willing to abandon to infamous sharers the pecuniary treasures of Pennsylvania? Consider the legal provisions intended to facilitate the means of transportation and conveyance by land and water throughout the commonwealth! Consider all your various establishments of public police! Consider how much the distribution of the large sums wisely defined or to be defined for these extensive purposes must depend on the pleasure of the Governor! Consider the various opportunities of artfully misdirecting or misapplying them! Will not the favored parasites procure them to be directed as may best answer their own interested views? Consider how much may be expended in improper places, while those which are proper are wholly disregarded or but partially noticed! Consider how much may be squandered from being intrusted to incapable hands! Consider too, if honest men can form any estimate on such a subject, how much may disappear, because intrusted to hands worse than incapable! What fairness in the distribution, what judgment or fidelity in the application, of the public treasures, ought to be expected, if such is to be the general character of extensive appointments and management?—Under such a system of individual degradation, of public weakness and of interested artifice, where are you to find those equal benefits, that general improvement and prosperity and wealth and honor, which have been projected with so much celebrity and with such prospects of success for Pennsylvania?

This excessive vanity which is the prey of flattery, this vanity which makes a public man the pity of his friends, the scorn of his enemies, and the tool of knaves, is an evil full of deadly poison to the state. Let all good men consider whether the body politic of Pennsylvania should be destined to suffer the incalculable evils of this insidious and ferocious poison! Let all men of sense, who dare to look at the subject with a steady eye,

reflect and judge whether such will not be its destiny if Thomas M'Kean is appointed its Governor!

Widely different from him is James Rofs of Pittsburgh. One of these two men is to be the Governor of the Commonwealth.—Reflect with the dignity of free citizens, and choose between them!

Is, then, James Rofs, or is Thomas M'Kean the man whom you will delight to honor with your suffrages? What shall be the armorial bearing of your political standard? At this question, does a blushing recollection of the past make you hesitate to avow your purpose for the future? Then, Sir, congratulate yourself on that blush! It is the glow of honorable sentiment. Indulge the full return of those manly principles which are yet precious to your heart! The indulgence will be for your interest as it is to your honor. Resume, then, your noble self, and decide as becomes the respectable character of a free American! You may then smile at an electioneering weakness which no longer afflicts you, and may promptly answer without that shrinking dread of reproach. The inquiry, therefore, is now repeated. What shall be the armorial bearing of your political standard? Shall it be the American Eagle, or an open anointed Crow? What shall be the character of your political navigator? Say which of the two you will have, a complete Helmsman, or a complete Weathercock!

FONTAINE.

Gazette Marine List.

Port of Philadelphia.

Brig Gayoff, Remington, from hence, has arrived at the Havana.

Schr. Success, Johnson, from hence, has arrived at the Havana.

The above vessels were not allowed entry the 18th August.

No arrivals at the Port.

The following vessels of war are stationed off the Havannah, viz.

Ship General Greene, Perry.

Brig Pinckney, Heywood.

South Carolina, Paine.

Ships Woodrop Sims, and Birmingham Packet, Kelly, from hence passed Gravesend July 3.

Ship Kingston, Hodge, Cape Francois, has arrived at New-York in 13 days.

Brig Paragon, Houston, Barracoa arrived at Port Republican.

City Hospital Report,

For the last 24 hours, ending this day at twelve o'clock.

ADMITTED.

Hannah Carney, 77 South street.

Mary Golden and Child, Race between Front and 2d street.

James Sneathan, 4th near front street.

DIED.

Maria Lockwood, admitted with black vomit and hæmorrhages from the nose and stomach, George Bowen, John Rittenger, Elizabeth Sneathan, John Wynkoop, Baltzer Speicer, John Partish, John Fogey, Mary Bary.

Remaining in the hospital 54, twenty-one of whom are convalescent.

The number of Interments in the different Burial Grounds of the City, for the last 24 hours, ending this day at 12 o'clock, is

1 Adult
5 Children
6 Total.

Interments in the City Hospital Ground, since last report:—

From the City Hospital	9
From the City and Suburbs	8
	17

Total number of Interments during last 24 hours

	23
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SAMUEL POTTER, WM. PAGE, AND THOMAS PRICE, HAVE removed to GERMANTOWN, between the five and six mile stones, where they have for sale, a general assortment of DRY GOODS, a great part of which they have just received by the ship Boyce from London, via New York.

N. B. Letters (Per Post) addressed to them Philadelphia, will be regularly forwarded.

Sept. 3, 1799. dtw&sthsfa

FOR SALE, The brig MARY, Capt. JOHN TARRIS, Now lying at Marcus Hook—a live oak and cedar vessel—will carry 2000 barrels, and has been newly sheathed. She is armed with 10 four-pounders, muskets, pistols, cutlasses, boarding-pikes, &c. For terms, apply to GURNEY & SMITH, Sep. 3. cotf

WAR DEPARTMENT,

Trenton, September 2, 1799.

ALL officers of the first regiment of Artillery and Engineers, and of the first, second, third and fourth regiments of Infantry in the service of the United States, who are, from whatever cause, absent from their commands, are required with all possible expedition to report themselves by letter to Major General Alexander Hamilton. The officers thus called upon, will be held amenable for any avoidable delay in reporting themselves, and those who do not report in four months from the date of this notification, will be presumed to have resigned their commissions.

JAMES M'HENRY.

The Printers in the several States, who published the proposals for the supply of rations during the year 1800, are requested to insert the above once a week in their papers, till the 1st of January next.

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