

To the Author of the Guest.

SIR,

A friend's house where I was lately visiting, some person present observing a negro child capering in the yard—exclaimed—what a (sprightly little devil it is!)—the circumstance led to a train of reflections, of which I send you the result.

It is a very general observation that mulatto and negro children discover a greater degree of vivacity and cunning, than white children of the same age; and many persons are at a loss to account for the difference, when they observe that as the former encrease in years, the reverse appears to be the case,—for a negro who was lively and ingenious in childhood, is observed to lose these qualities as he advances in life—and old negroes are generally reserved, dull and stupid.

The history of this business I conceive to be this—the Creator hath endued all animals with a principle of activity—this discovers itself with the greatest force while they are young—hence children of all colours, are forever in motion, when awake—this activity is equally observable in all—and affords one incontestible evidence, that in the distribution of active, and ingenious powers, nature does not confine its gifts to hair, or wool—what then occasions the difference in after life? Education entirely—education is but another word for discipline—the natural versatility of the human mind by the influence of rules and orders is corrected; the wanderings of the fancy is restrained; and that propensity, which unchecked, ripens into mischievous ingenuity, and monkeyish adroitness, is made subservient to useful acquirements, under the hand of parental tenderness, and unremitting care, and vigilance—But the ill fated sable race, are generally neglected, or if attended to, the attention has a very unpropitious aspect on their future fate—accustomed to consider Africans as property, but little superior to four legged animals, their proprietors too often treat them as such—as mere machines of temporary amusement—hence their infant gambols, monkey tricks and pertness, are encouraged by smiles and laughter—some carry the fatal humour so far, as never to discourage the infant budgings of artfulness, tricking and lying—thus nurturing and hardening them in vice—without the smallest efforts to instill into their minds, contrary principles.—This is the mode of treatment generally adopted towards black and yellow children—the consequences are such as all the world is acquainted with—the wretched effects have given rise to an idea, that blacks are deficient in mental powers—but I leave it to the sober judgment of every candid white person, whether similar treatment would not necessarily produce the same apparent incompetency in the whites. There are some persons, who, in many respects conduct towards their children, agreeable to the above mode of treating blacks—essential instructions are omitted; but what is called sprightliness, manliness, &c. are encouraged, till a pert boldness, a knack at swearing, and a taste for dissipation, comprehend the whole circle of the sciences to young masters. You shall hear from me again shortly. Your's, C.

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, FEB. 1, 1790.

MR. GALE, member from Maryland, took his seat this day.

The bill for defining and punishing certain crimes against the United States, was read a second time, and made the order of the day for Friday next. Ordered, that 100 copies be printed for the use of the House.

The order of the day being called for, the House went into a committee of the whole on the bill for securing to authors and proprietors the copy right of their works.

Mr. Baldwin in the chair.

The bill was read and discussed in paragraphs. The committee then rose, and reported the same with amendments. It was moved that the bill should be re committed. This was objected to.

The motion for re-commitment was withdrawn, and the House proceeded to consider the amendments—to all of which they agreed. It was then ordered that the bill be engrossed for a third reading to morrow.

Mr. White of the committee appointed to examine into the measures taken by Congress respecting lands granted by the State of Virginia, for the troops of that State, brought in a report which was read.

A message was received from the President of the United States, by his Secretary, communicating a letter from the Gov. of North Carolina, with a copy of the act of that State, ceding to the United States, certain Western Lands, therein described.

The message with the accompanying act were read—and on motion of Mr. Smith, (S. C.) referred to a committee to report thereon. The following gentlemen were appointed accordingly, Mr. Clymer, Mr. Tucker, Mr. Gale, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Matthews.

Mr. Hartley moved that a committee should be appointed to bring in a bill providing for a general system of Bankruptcy in the United States.

Mr. Smith, (S. C.) objected to taking up the subject immediately, as he conceived the present situation of the country is such, as to render a general law on this subject a more intricate and perplexing business than the gentleman is aware of. He thought it best to defer the business till the public debt should be funded, and banks established, without which it is difficult to conceive how arrangements can be made to facilitate the payment of debts, or the operation of such a law.—He said the insolvent acts in the several States would answer at present.

Mr. Hartley replied, that the constitution required that an act should be passed by Congress on the subject; but he was not for hurrying it through the house the present session, he was desirous however that some steps should be taken to shew that the Congress had the credit of the country in view.

Mr. Sedgwick followed Mr. Smith in a similar train of observations, and adverting to the present state of that country from whence many of our

MR. FENNO,

IN looking over the letters I received a few weeks ago from Europe, I find one of my correspondents has made some strictures on the debates of Congress. As his remarks are dilated with candor, and perhaps may not be deemed uninteresting, I send you an extract from this letter, which if you please you may insert in your paper. A. Z. New-York, Feb. 2, 1790.

LONDON, November 2, 1789.

DEAR SIR,

I THANK you for the news-papers you sent me, containing the debates of Congress. Your Legislature, in their first session, made good progress. The most interesting subjects however are yet to be brought forward. The present complexion of your public affairs appears favorable, and if Congress in their second session pursue their determinations expressed in the first, your system will be complete; your friends in this country have strong expectations that the American government will soon assume the most respectable character of any on earth. There are now no difficulties in the way. If your Legislature make the most of their situation, your country will rise into honor and prosperity.

I have perused the debates of Congress, with most critical attention. They do honor to your Representatives, who generally have given indications of abilities and integrity; but I must confess I am in some respects a little disappointed. The debates discover less independence of spirit than I expected from men so favorably situated for giving scope to their talents: I will explain to you my ideas on this subject.

In the first place it may be remarked, that the speakers in Congress have not yet acquired confidence in themselves; They speak as if they thought themselves unequal to the task they had to accomplish. In many instances, we find good arguments lose the weight from not being more confidently urged; and the members appear to want resolution more than sense or honesty. They view their situation in a light, so new and untried, as to create a distrust of their own abilities to act in it with propriety. This diffidence may be commendable from the motive that gives rise to it, but it will retard public measures and beget unreasonable precautions. Your Legislators have good ground of confidence in themselves. The world think favorably of them, and believe them competent to the part they have assumed.

Another circumstance observable in the debates is, that your representatives appear not to have confidence in their constituents. The speakers often express fears how a measure will affect the feelings of the people. There is more evil to be apprehended from this kind of diffidence than from any other source; and yet there is little foundation for cherishing such a diffidence. The people of your country will submit to any thing that promotes the public good. There is no formidable opposition against the government; and your Legislators have no reason to doubt that such measures, as are intrinsically the best, will be the most universally approved. Whatever is just and useful will not among so enlightened a people, for any length of time, be unpopular. The disposition of your citizens is as favorable as can be wished, and they will cheerfully acquiesce in all the honest measures of the government. The resources of your country are immense, and no part of the globe has such inherent advantages for revenue. Where is the mighty difficulty in establishing public credit, and in that way, acquiring an honorable character and realizing all the benefits that your situation affords? The Legislators of the United States have nothing to fear from their constituents while the plans of the government are founded in wisdom and honesty. The public opinion is scarcely formed on the most important subjects, and it is the business of the Legislature to impress the public mind with virtuous principles, before vicious ones have gained a prevalence. (To be concluded in the next paper.)

FROM THE CONNECTICUT JOURNAL.

THE common custom of Farmers in this State, is to sow on good land, from one to one bushel and an half bushel of seed on an acre of ground. "They that sow sparingly shall reap sparingly," is a maxim well applicable to our farmers who raise flax.—I believe the general produce of an acre sown at this rate is, on an average, one hundred and sixty weight of flax when dressed. And this flax is generally short and coarse.

A Gentleman of undisputed veracity, in a neighbouring State, lately gave this account.—"That he had two acres of good ground, which he designed to sow with flax; and that one of his neighbors asked the privilege of sowing it to halves, which he granted, on condition that he should put five bushels of seed upon it;—he accordingly did—and that in autumn he received for his half, five hundred weight of well dressed flax;—that it was very long, and much finer than common."

This is more than three times the quantity of flax that is commonly raised from an acre of ground, with only the additional expence of one, or one and a half bushel of seed. But this expence would be more than compensated by the additional quantity of seed produced.

If this hint should prove of any service to those who cultivate flax, I shall think this not written in vain. AGRICOLA.

FAYETTEVILLE, Jan. 1790.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in London, to his friend in this town.

"The new federal duties are smart, but they will assist Congress to bring about an efficient government—your state keeping aloof from so respectable a body is too ridiculous to make any comment upon the absurdity of the idea. This country will not long tamely submit to America laying duties on our shipping; this I can tell you of a truth, having been the other day closeted with some of our great men on that head. This idea was received, I could plainly see, from a self-interested merchant, and not the breathings of a liberal patriot and politician! indeed I was told something must be done, and if America had any thing to offer, let her do it, for that other alien nations had asked the ministers of this kingdom, and requested an answer—"Why is not America treated as an alien nation, supposing her a favourite one too, and the same alien duties imposed upon her exports as are levied upon ours." You see how the physic works, our general committee is this day summoned upon the business by the laws of trade; your pot-ash will I am afraid, be an object."

Can a general system stand with any punctuality upon such uncertainties? Will it not be in the power of a single state, by altering its own laws, at any time to disconcert the general treasury arrangement? Will the treasury officers ever be able to give an exact account of the national revenue, in whose hands monies are, or whether in a safe situation? I will propose a question which to the people is still a more serious one—Those public officers intrusted with the revenue, and with the disposition of monies, ought to be placed in the most accountable situation; from the integrity of those now in office, we cannot infer the honor or honesty of their successors; and will not so complex a plan as we are now considering, give the greatest room for evasion and fraud, that can never be detected? Whoever considers these questions, in some of them, will find unanswerable objections, against apportioning to the States, and adopting in each one, its own method of taxing and collecting.

If neither of the above methods are feasible, the general government must adopt a system of its own, on plain principles, which may operate thro' the whole with equal expedition and justice.

The greatest evil is to be expected from a plan which either gives discretionary power to subordinate officers of government, in dividing the taxes on the people; or is so complex in its principles and operation that they cannot understand it. No good man will murmur when he sees himself treated on principles of equality; but lawgivers ought to remember, that for the common citizens to see this, the mode of taxation must be very plain. It is but a few, who have a thorough knowledge of the principles and influence of the tax laws in their own States, and this they have acquired by living long under them. Should the general government adopt a complex system, by detaching the most eligible parts, from all the local customs within the union, it would still appear to the people a proper object of jealousy, and not seeing an equal operation on others, they would suppose themselves injured. If there be any kind of property which is the basis of wealth throughout the union, and bears a near proportion to the ability of the people who must pay; if this kind of property cannot be secreted, and may be charged on principles of greater equality than any other; if the nature of the property be such that every man may previously calculate his taxes, and detect an overcharge; if it admits a more easy and cheap collection than any other; if its produce must forever be in demand, which will enable the person charged to pay his taxes; this property on some plain principles ought to be the subject of direct taxation.

PARIS, Nov. 5.

THE final decision of the grand question on the property of the Clergy, was agitated in no less than nine different Assemblies, and has produced most violent debates. The importance of the decision, brought back all ranks of people to Paris, and it was finally determined in the fullest meeting that has assembled since the first opening of the States General, there being no fewer than 964 Members present.

The Count de Mirabeau, closed the debate with the following pertinent remarks, tending to shew the revenues of the Clergy were the property of the people.

"These revenues says he, have been given to the Clergy, either by Monarchs or private persons, or purchased by them. If Monarchs gave them, in that case, they originally belonged to the people; if private persons—they bestowed them on the Clergy for the use of the public worship, which belongs to the people; if the revenues have been purchased, it was done with the saving of money, the amount of which belonged to the people.

The question was then carried in the following words:

First, "That all the Ecclesiastical property is at the disposal of the nation, at the Charge of providing in a proper manner for the propagation of religion, to maintain its Ministers, and ease the poor, under the inspection, and conformable to the instructions of provinces.

Art. II. "That in the dispositions to be made for maintaining the Ministers of Religion, no Curate shall have less than 1200 livres per annum, exclusive of his lodging and garden."

In favor of the Decree	578
Against it	346

Majority	232
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The Caisse d'Escompte still does honour to its notes; about 30,000 of them are daily paid; they are chiefly of 1000 livres each (about 40 guineas.) Foreign bills of exchange, and drafts, are generally paid at the Caisse d'Escompte; bankers have sent almost all their cash to that bank.

LONDON, November 9.

The Imperial forces in Brabant under General d'Alton, have hung up every person they have found in arms. At Louvaine, several of the Insurgents have been executed on a temporary gallows.