

MR. FENNO,

A CANDID view of the circumstances and causes which have heretofore tended to give impressions unfavorable to the American public character, may probably lead to an investigation of the means by which a remedy is to be effected—a future confidence established—and the respectability of this country placed on an immovable basis.

It is not the least surprising to the thinking mind, that the critical situation of public affairs, during a long and perilous war, of these States of an opportunity to examine nicely, the texture of those forms of government which were erected during that period, or how far their principles promised stability and firmness in their operation—nor is it more to be wondered at, by those who are acquainted with human nature, that after the object which originated the late contest was obtained, and before cool reason had confirmed a Union which common danger only had prompted, that each branch in the copartnership should discover an inclination to rid itself of its proportion of the price of our Independence—and a jealousy relating to the share each would have in the advantages resulting from it, while the collective whole should appear to have no other idea of a future well established government, but as the erection of a tyranny at home in lieu of the one they had just rid themselves of from abroad, arising from the vibrations of the pendulum to the opposite extreme.

The aforementioned causes jointly operated to produce imbecility, error, and in some instances, fraud in our public acts; and to bring upon us the contempt of foreign powers; the general interest became a sacrifice to the contracted policy of each State—the little views of some individuals, and the licentious hopes of many others.

Happy for America a different scene now opens to view—and the dark shades in the picture just given, are fast dissipating under the operation of a free, but efficient national government—and every heart must dilate with joy at our prospects, while with reason we can anticipate all those blessings which must necessarily accrue from a speedy restoration of public faith and honor upon the establishment of an adequate system for funding the debt of the United States.

As communities are but the collection of individuals, the same principles and practices which tend to advance the interest of each individual in his private capacity, must lead to their corporate welfare—nor can any thing morally wrong be politically right—tho' the contrary maxim has been often inculcated—its mischievous consequences have ever been manifest—while the principle itself of adhering strictly to the dictates of justice in public affairs, must influence the well disposed Statesman—he will find the policy of his conduct also evidenced in the former splendor of the ancient States of Greece and Rome, and the modern one of Great-Britain, who by a sacred regard to her public promises, has been able to command resources astonishing to all the world, and to carry on a series of wars which would have made bankrupts of all the other powers of Europe.

Among the preliminary steps to an adequate funding system in America, will be the assumption of the State debts by the Union. The history of France from the earliest stage of her political existence, is pregnant with evils resulting from the division of power in her government, and the exclusive rights vested in the provincial parliaments: The present deranged state of her finances may be in a great measure traced to the same sources—while the opposite of the whole scene, as exhibited in Great Britain, is owing to the reverse of her political economy. To produce firmness, stability and vigor in national measures, it is expedient that all interests should be as far as possible united with one general concentration of power—a division in either case, is productive of jarrings and discord, and consequent languor and indecision: From this it will appear evident, that one uniform system of finance in this country is not only a necessary but an indispensable measure—the mode once confirmed, the next consideration will be as to the means by which government shall be enabled to comply with its promises, and appropriations—and here the propriety of an excise, in addition to the impost, appears palpable, as the former will be insufficient to answer the above purposes, though (as I have observed in some former papers) a reduction of the interest should take place under the new establishment.

The product of both Impost and Excise I also conceive to be virtually depending on the extension of our commerce, and having our intercourse with other nations secured by explicit treaty or contract—no longer to be subject to the uncertain tenure of legislative acts—while commercial agents are deputed abroad to guarantee the observance of such contracts, and to protect the interests of individuals trading to foreign ports.

The necessity of these regulations become more apparent when we reflect that the rapid increase of this country in population and wealth, and the

enterprise of its inhabitants, will naturally excite the observation of the European powers, and soon give rise to all the jealousies of commercial rivalry. Our commerce with them, unsupported by treaty, would probably feel all those injurious fluctuations which such jealousies have a tendency to produce—while our commerce will be greatly assisted by the foreign regulations just attended to, the importance of a code of well constructed inspection laws at home is equally obvious—and these ought no longer to be executed by those who value neither honor or honor; but by men of established reputation, and who will not consent to sacrifice their character at the shrine of avarice—till this is the case our inspection laws will only increase the evils they are intended to prevent.

Most of the nations of Europe, sensible of the importance of commerce, are using every means for its extension and liberal establishment, and the removal of those impediments to it, which have heretofore existed in France, are among the most conspicuous improvements of her late enlightened policy. The advantages reaped by Great-Britain from this source need no comment.

Examples brought from abroad will have their due weight—but the good information, and political knowledge possessed, abstractedly by Congress, must suggest the propriety of an early attention to the subject here treated of, as involving the most essential objects which gave rise to the late revolution in our government, and as intimately connected with the general prosperity and welfare of the American Empire

A M E R I C A N U S.

PRESIDENT SULLIVAN'S MESSAGE.

To the Hon. SENATE and HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES, [of NEW-HAMPSHIRE.]

GENTLEMEN,

HAVING been informed, that doubts have arisen in the minds of some, whether my having accepted the office of District Judge has not disqualified me from acting as President of the State, until a new election takes place, I confess that I have never been able to discover any incompatibility in the two offices. But as some have attempted to prove this by urging the words of a Constitution framed for the purpose of establishing over the people of New-Hampshire a free, sovereign and independent government—I must observe, that this government has since been changed by the voice of the people, who have agreed that their safety depended on their relinquishing many of the powers retained by the people in that Constitution, to a General Government established for the people of each and every State who should adopt it; which to them was to become the general law of the land. The people of this State did, in the most solemn manner, adopt and ratify that Constitution; and from that event, THIS CEASED TO BE A FREE, SOVEREIGN, AND INDEPENDENT STATE; and upon my being elected to the office of President, I was only sworn to perform and fulfil the duties incumbent on me as President of a free and confederate State; and I was at or near the same time sworn to support the Constitution of the United States, by virtue of a law enacted by yourselves.

While I was continuing to preside in this State, I was appointed under that Constitution which the people of New-Hampshire had adopted for themselves, a Judge of the Federal Court. My own inclinations were far from leading me to wish to continue in both offices; but I was put in by the people, and could not devise a way of resigning the trust committed to me, but into the hands who honoured me with it. I well knew that the time for electing a new President was near at hand, when the people might have an opportunity of declaring who should preside over them; and all the public papers having been entrusted to my care, and the affairs of the State unfolded to me, I could not, without an unpardonable breach of trust, neglect to lay them before you. I also considered, that while I was living in the State, no other person could, by your own laws, administer the necessary oaths to you, to qualify you to act as Legislators, while the time for which I was chosen was not expired; and as I knew that this would probably be the last session of this Court, for the present year; and I had no inclination to propose myself as a candidate for another—I concluded delicacy would have prevented some persons from pursuing the methods they have adopted, for gratifying a spirit which ought never to lodge itself in the branch of a Legislature.

GENTLEMEN,

You will see the situation I am in, and may easily conceive of my feelings upon this subject, being brought forward, at every opportunity, to satiate that spirit which has often, before this session of the Court, displayed itself before me, and used every effort against me.

The President and Senate of the United States were, at the time of my appointment, well acquainted with my having to finish my year in presiding over this State; but no hint has ever been given to me of my acceptance of an office under the present general government, rendering

void any State appointment; even though I have had the honour of being often, since my acceptance of the office of District Judge for New-Hampshire, in company with the President of the United States, who knew I was the President of this State, and treated me as such, although he at the same time knew that I had long before accepted the office of Federal Judge.

I know the candour and justice of the members of both branches; and I have too high an opinion of their integrity and uprightness to suppose, that they will suffer themselves to be influenced by the efforts of one or more, who cannot avoid at every opportunity, discovering the spirit which actuates them in their conduct. I have the honour, &c.

JOHN SULLIVAN.

Dec. 29, 1789.

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1790.

A Memorial from Hon. Robert Morris, late Superintendent of finance, enclosed to the speaker was read—the enclosure contained a request that the memorial might be entered on the journals of the House—laid on the table.

The memorialist after stating a variety of facts relative to the business of which he had been appointed superintendent—the difficulties, delays, and embarrassments which had prevented a final adjustment and settlement of his accounts—petitions that commissioners may be appointed for that purpose.

Mr. Goodhue presented a petition from sundry inhabitants of Salem—stating that thro' a very particular construction of a section in the coasting law, vessels owned by the citizens of the United States, and as they thought properly qualified as such, had been obliged to pay the alien duty in some of the southern States—and praying relief or a refund of the duty so paid—laid on the table.

Several petitions and memorials were read, from persons who had made sundry discoveries, and invented certain machines praying encouragement, and a securing of the benefits of their inventions—laid on the table.

On motion of Mr. Sedgwick the committee of the whole house was discharged from any further discussion of the bill providing for the actual enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States. It was then voted that the bills in the bill should be filled up.

The first blank respected the time to be allowed for completing the enumeration—6, 4, and 3 months were proposed.

Mr. Sedgwick observed, that as so long a time is to elapse before the assistants are to enter upon the business, the work of preparation will be completed in such a manner, that he conceived three, two, or even one month will be sufficient.

Mr. White said that he was very sure that in many of the States, two, three or four months will not be sufficient—and six months will be found short enough to complete the enumeration in those States—in the eastern States the business may be finished in a much shorter period—but when the time shall be elapsed, that is allowed by law, and the enumeration is completed in some of the States, and the numbers fully returned, it cannot be supposed that those States who have not completed theirs, should acquiesce in any regulations, and establishments founded on so imperfect a census.

Mr. Burke was in favor of allowing the longest period—and stated a great variety of obstacles and impediments in the way of completing the enumeration within so short a time, even as six months; and the census when returned in so incomplete a state, it could not be supposed would be satisfactory; it would create uneasiness and terminate in absolute injustice.

Mr. Jackson advertising to the peculiar circumstances of the southern States, particularly Georgia; and the recent accession of North-Carolina; the extensiveness of the territory of those States, and the dispersed situation of their inhabitants—contended that six months would be but a short time to complete the business in.

Mr. Madison observed that the situation of the several States was various, that the difficulty of adopting a plan for effecting the business upon terms that would give general satisfaction, can only be obviated by allowing sufficient time. Some of the States have been in habits of taking an enumeration of their citizens; others have never done it at all; to the former the business will be easy, and may be completed within perhaps the shortest period; in the others, it will be attended with difficulties at present unforeseen. In addition to these, there is a variety of other considerations to be taken into view; there is a greater number of assistants employed in the southern States; there are many contingencies that cannot be provided against; the assistants may die, and leave the business unfinished; it may be necessary to appoint others; the returns from so many persons, from such extensive districts, will require such a length of time, as leaves no probability that it can be completed in a shorter period than six months.

Mr. Sedgwick said he had no wish to precipitate the business: The equalizing the representation ought to be a matter of serious contemplation to every gentleman, it is peculiarly so to the delegation from those States who are so unequally represented: I wish for a full and complete enumeration; and am for allowing full time to complete it in: But there does not appear to me to be any force in the objection raised from the contingency of the death of the assistants: The longer the period, the greater the probability of such events: And I am clearly of opinion that extending the period will not conduce to obtaining finally so accurate an enumeration.

Mr. Smith, (S. C.) Mr. Burke, and Mr. Jackson made a few additional observations, when

The question being taken on "six months," it was carried in the affirmative.

The assistants failing to make returns to the marshals within the time limited by this act to forfeit 200 dollars.

The marshals to make returns of the aggregate amount to the President of the United States, by the first day of June next, under penalty of 800 dollars.

Some other bills were filled in amendments which had been adopted—The bill being gone through.

It was passed, to be enacted.

A message was received from the President of the United States by his Secretary, with the act for giving effect to the laws of the United States in the State of North Carolina, and for other purposes, which has received the President's assent and signature.

In committee of the whole, on the report of the Secretary of the Treasury relative to a provision for the support of the public credit—Mr. Baldwin in the chair.

Mr. Smith (S. C.) after premising a mode which he deemed eligible in taking up the subjects contained in the report, read certain resolutions which he proposed to lay on the table: These resolutions he supposed would bring the several objects of discussion to a point, so that the committee might proceed with more accuracy in the business.

These resolutions referred to the principal objects of the report—laid on the table.

Mr. Boudinot entered into a consideration of the subject of the debt: He adverted to the resolution of the last session, and to the answer of the House to the President's speech; by which he conceived the United States have pledged themselves to make adequate provision for the support of the public faith: He thought the mode pointed out by the gentleman from South Carolina, would