

Gazette of the United States.

PUBLISHED WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS BY JOHN FENNO, No. 9, MAIDEN-LANE, NEW-YORK.

[No. XCIX.]

W E D N E S D A Y, MARCH, 24, 1790.

PRICE THREE DOLLARS PR. ANN.

THE TABLET.

No. XCIX.

"Great events give scope for great virtues; but the main tenor of human life is composed of small occurrences."

THE greater part of mankind can be conversant only in small occupations and incidents. There are few eminent stations to be filled, and few remarkable events to be noticed by men. We should therefore conclude, that the materials of our happiness, and the objects of our duty, principally consist in the due regulation of the common transactions of life. In whatever sphere a man may move, his virtue is frequently put to a trial, respecting matters which appeared too trivial to have exercised his thoughts. He departs from the line of his duty, and mars his felicity in many instances, merely because he does not view the occasion important enough, to make it material in what manner he conducts. There is no remedy against the evils which result from errors in the small concerns of life, but to acquire such virtuous dispositions and habits as lead us to prefer right to wrong, in the most immaterial circumstance that may occur.

In distinguished situations, a man may be prompted to great exertions, and restrained from vicious actions, from a regard to his character. But in the humble walks of his life he may suppose his character out of the reach of notice, and will not be on his guard against those little slips and inadvertencies, which are more prejudicial to his happiness, and indicate a want of virtuous habits, in a greater degree than errors or omissions of duty, in more conspicuous situations. The reason is obvious. We are seldom called to the performance of illustrious actions; but every day and every hour of life introduces us to common occurrences. An habit of doing wrong in these will occur so frequently that the aggregate of inconvenience will exceed what would result from a wrong procedure, in the few instances of eminent conduct, with which we may be conversant. The danger likewise of error on great occasions is diminished by the energy of motive that impels us to act with propriety.

Habits of virtue form the only security against the numerous temptations by which we are constantly surrounded. "They must be formed and supported, not by unfrequent acts, but by daily and frequent exertion, in order to their becoming vigorous and useful. Great events give scope for great virtues; but the tenor of human life is composed of small occurrences. Within the round of these lie the materials of happiness of most men; the subjects of their duty, and the trials of their virtue. Whatever is to be our profession, no education is more necessary to success, than the acquirement of virtuous dispositions and habits. Whether science, or business, or public life be our aim, virtue still enters for a principal share into all those great departments of society. By whatever arts we may at first attract the attention, we can hold the esteem and secure the hearts of others, only by amiable dispositions, discreet habits and virtuous actions."

BRUSSELS, Jan. 1, 1790.

The following is the Copy of a Letter from the Emperor to General D'Alton, Commander in Chief in the Low Countries, dated Nov. 22. Intercepted by the Patriots.

"I received, my Gen. this day, by dispatch, your report of the 14th, and I leave you to judge if I have not reason to be surprized, that since the 31st of October, which was the date of your last letter, I have not received from you further reports of the important circumstances and state of the country that is confided to your care. I can say nothing of the events, because I am ignorant of the dispositions that are made; but they appear inefficacious, by the evil growing worse. The permitting the rebels to establish themselves in Flanders, and take Ghent, may be attended by the most troublesome consequences.

"I expect, in your next report, that the troops which arrived effected the purpose. This is not the moment to complain, but to endeavor for the general good, and establishment of order in the provinces.

"I am still ignorant of the effects the different requisitions have produced, and of the evidence against the people of distinction that are arrested, as you have not mentioned either in your reports.

(Signed)

JOSEPH."

Copy of a Letter from General D'Alton to the Emperor, dated Brussels, November 27. Intercepted by the Patriots.

"Since my report of the 20th instant, made to your Majesty, the placard of the same date, published the day after, proves that my ideas were just, upon the intentions of Government; the insolence of the people, notwithstanding does not contradict it. Not only the four companies of the regiment of Clairfayt, and two of Vierfit, are detained prisoners at Ghent, and that of Captain Broporé at Bruges, but bands of Patriots are again upon our frontiers. The day after (the 21st) the insurgents, to the amount of many thousands, threw themselves into Turnhout and Hoogstraeten, which they still occupy. The rebels of Flanders are entrenched at Ghent, and many of them joined those in the town of Diest after an action in which they lost two or three hundred men, but obliged Major Broeda, with a division of the regiment of Bender, which he commanded, to retire to Arschot, with the loss of nineteen men and a piece of cannon.

"The misfortune at Diest was most unexpected by me, and owing to General Count Baillet, who commanded at Louvain, deferring for twenty-four hours the dispositions I ordered to make.

"To parry the danger of the attack upon Louvain, I instantly placed a battalion on the borders of the forest of Meldert, to intercept all those inclining that way.

"General Hopencourt having evacuated Mons without my orders, on the simple requisition of Colonel Blekem, who found himself threatened at Namur, I sent him, with his battalion and squadron to the right of Neville, where he now is, and from whence I may order him either to Louvain or to Brussels, as occasion may require.

"The account of the taking of Diest, determined me to assemble a force at Louvain, to drive off the insurgents; and I ordered a battalion of the regiment of Ligne to march to that garrison, and intended myself to take the executive command of four battalions, and three hundred and fifty horse, to force that troop of banditti; but the edict of the 21st inst. required infinite circumspection on my part, and not to cross the negotiations of the Minister, recommended by his letter to the people, of the 25th instant. I enclosed him a copy of the opinions of the general officers, and Colonel de Brose, assembled in council, at my house; but having received an equivocal and verbal answer, I addressed to him a note, a copy of which I enclose for your Majesty, and meeting with a similar answer, I repeated my representation; and the Minister coming to me in company with the Vice Chancellor, M. Crumpipen every reason urged could not make him alter his conduct, notwithstanding the importance of the object, under the pretext, that he should wait the effect of his letter, written the 25th, and the Edict of the 26th; however, I engaged him to make no further concession, which he promised me; I then determined to defer my expedition until the insurgents were informed of the favorable disposition of Government, although I had taken the preparatory and certain measures to reduce them, &c. &c.

"But what was my astonishment to find that the Edict of that day had been printed, and distributed to the public two hours before the Minister declared, in a note to me (the original of which I subjoin to this,) that he would not suffer it to be published, until we had determined upon that point. Such is the situation in which I find myself, and I dare to hope your Majesty will deign to see the defect of that situation. My troops, in garrisons, incessantly occupied in strengthening them, those detached, harrassed, by continual marches, and my operations always counteracted, or at least stopped by the shackles of administration. Surrounded by these misfortunes, I received from Colonel Buckim an account a little satisfactory of the first advantage gained over the banditti.

"Your Majesty will find, by the original, that I have the honor to transmit to you, that it is sufficient to shew ourselves to this undisciplined mob to disperse them; and that the insurrection in the country would have long since been smothered, if my advice had been attended to, and above all, if my orders had been obeyed. I expect that my next report will prove to your Majesty, how much I had reason to think, that it is by force alone that these people are to be governed, now that administration are abandoned to the most humiliating concessions.

"In the mean time I have the honor to transmit to your Majesty a copy of a note, I this day

sent to the minister; it will, without doubt, prove to him, that I never deviated from the constant and uniform conduct I imposed upon myself, not to take any step without first consulting him; and that I have infinite cause to complain of the incessant obstacles administration throws in my way by visible delays, and other acts, to those dispositions that circumstances require.

"I shall not finish my report, without informing your Majesty, that I believe, notwithstanding all the concessions of Government, the Insurgents will not accede to the propositions, unless the future maintenance of their privileges are guaranteed by other powers.

(Signed)

D'ALTON."

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, MARCH 1, 1790.

IN committee of the whole House.—The proposition for assuming the State debts, and the amendments proposed thereto, being under consideration.

MR. JACKSON observed, that he had been, from the introduction of the resolutions before the committee, particularly against the one now in contemplation: That he was opposed to it, not only in its original form, but in every possible modification it might assume. That his indisposition had prevented his rising before: That altho many arguments must have been used, which it was impossible for him to know: His duty compelled him to come forward; not with an expectation that his small abilities could change the sentiments of a single member, or that he should gain a single proselyte; but to shew the reasons for which he opposed the measure, and to produce some facts arising in the State he represented. He confessed, that if he was in favor of any modification, it was the one which an honorable gentleman from Virginia (Mr. White) had brought forward a few days since. As he had not been present at the former part of the debate, he hoped the house would indulge him in entering on the original ground, and pointing out the light in which the business appeared to him.

The question might be viewed on three grounds: 1st. the expediency; 2d. the policy; and 3dly. the justice of the resolution.

It might be expedient, either from the pressing call of the States who might complain of the grievance of their debts; or, it might be expedient from the clamors of the citizens of the respective States, complaining of the State taxation. On the first point, he believed the States had made no such request, and that therefore the expediency on that head was obviated. That he had heard indeed, that South-Carolina had made some kind of application, but that one or two States could not declare the sense of the Union; it could be known only by a majority, which did not appear to demand this assumption. That on the contrary he believed a majority of the States were against the proposition, and that North-Carolina had made it an article of amendment, "that Congress should not interfere with the state debts," and that the voice of North-Carolina, as well as South-Carolina, should be attended to. With respect to individual citizens, no complaints had been made to the house; no petitions or instructions had been forwarded to their representatives. Here he would remark, that it was on this latter principle he wished, at a former day, the postponement of the question, that the sense of his constituents might be known. The wish of individuals was therefore not ascertained by either method, and he believed that a great majority were for the State debts remaining as they were. That they were satisfied with the State taxation by known and accustomed methods, handed down to them by their ancestors. Many of the States had imposed taxes in those certificates, and had extinguished a great part of the State debts; which taxes the citizens had cheerfully submitted to: This had been done in the State he represented.

To those, he observed, he might add a third reason, why it was not expedient, the creditors themselves had not requested it; there was no petition, no evidence to warrant a construction that they wished it.

He would now consider its policy: Here the field expanded. He had as high an opinion of the Secretary's abilities as any man: They were conspicuous: The force of his genius was striking, and his talents in the report were admired; but he was one of those who did not think the Secretary infallible; as long as he possessed human nature, so long would he possess the imperfections and failings of human nature. Ambition, laudable perhaps, to do the utmost for the Union, might lead him too far, and the plan, evidently to him, in its policy, had reference to one of two points: First, that it is extended as an additional ligature to the continent, by detaching the creditors from their dependence on the state governments, and transferring that dependence to the nation, and thereby making it the interest of the remote parts of the Union to support its measures; or, secondly, by this specious method of relieving the States, to remove every pretext for taxation from them, and thereby throw that power entirely into the hands of Congress.

If we examine however the first of those positions, we shall find it will not hold its ground; for, the securities of the respective States, like those of the continent, will change their holders; nay, they are already to the fourth part gone from the original creditors and are in the hands of speculators: they will like the continental securities, be drawn to a point in a few commercial cities, or travel into the hands of foreigners. The ligature, if this position is true, will therefore not hold; the tie will soon be broken.

The second will better stand its ground; and I grant that the whole powers of taxation may be absorbed by the Union. But Sir, is it policy to take all the powers of taxation from the individual States and leave them with the shadow of a government. Is it policy to reduce their power to the insignificance of a small city corporation, or will the citizens be pleased with it? A majority, I believe, will be found attached to the modes and laws of the State governments. Some of the most zealous partisans of the present government, in the State conventions, in order to point out its excellencies, compared it to a pyramid; the foundation of which was the broad basis of the people, the middle or second story the State governments, and the top or head the government of the Union. Sir, let us beware, lest in weakening this centre work, the head itself is not in danger. The system before the committee would require a multitude of tax gatherers, who would be oppressive to the people; and at the best view what would the people gain, but a change of masters and customs which they had been used to, for masters and customs they had been unacquainted with.

The Union, he observed, had been frequently compared to a rope of sand; it was well to beware, lest the argument be carried too far the other way; lest this ligature—this cord, by its too great