

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

MR. FENNO,

Agreeable to the hint in No. 74 of your Gazette, I send you the following, which may enable your readers to form some ideas on

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE AMERICAN NATION.

POPULATION of the United States,
Whites, 3,300,000 Blacks, 700,000

*Representatives to the general government, 65
Number of souls to each representative, 61,538
Number of males between 16 and 60,
Whites, 825,000 Blacks, 175,000

Number of persons exempted from militia service, about — — — 100,000
Number of fighting men from 18 to 45, about — — — 600,000

Gross amount of duties, impost and taxes, collected in the year 1790.

For support of the general government, payment of foreign interest, and to create a sinking fund, 2,500,000
For support of the State governments, 1,500,000

4,000,000

Each soul pays 1 dollar.—Each male between 16 and 60, pays 4 dollars.

The amount to be collected in the present year will be greater, because provision must be made for paying the interest on the national debt.—The whole gross amount that will be necessary, may be computed at 6,000,000 dollars†—out of which the United States may have a sinking fund, which, in addition to the Western lands, may reduce the debt, in a period of time not very long, to a trifle. Each soul will then pay 1½ dollar. Each man, between 16 and 60, would pay 6 dollars; but when it is considered that the revenue of the United States is chiefly collected by duties on consumption, and that the rich consume more than the poor, it is probable that the poorer class of citizens will not pay half a dollar a year.

The debt of the United States divides itself into foreign and domestic.

The foreign debt, the interest of which is payable in Europe, including the last 2,000,000 loan, may be computed at — — — 12,000,000

This part of the debt is liable to augmentation, as there is power to borrow 12,000,000 to discharge arrearages of interest, and to effect some changes in the debt, beneficial to the Union.

The domestic debt may be as follows—on the idea of the whole being subscribed—

6 per cents, bearing interest from 1st January, 1791, about	19,000,000
6 per cents, bearing interest from 1st January, 1792,	10,000,000
	29,000,000
6 per cents, bearing interest from 1st January, 1801, — —	13,000,000
3 per cents, bearing interest from 1st January, 1791, — —	14,000,000
3 per cents, bearing interest from 1st January, 1792, — —	7,000,000
	21,000,000

Interest to be provided in 1791.

On foreign debt, with necessary charges, 600,000

* This number, in all probability, at the next general election, will be increased to one hundred.

† Formed as follows, viz.

For the general government,

Annual expences of government, about	800,000
To pay foreign and domestic interest, about	3,000,000
For a sinking fund, about	200,000
	4,000,000

For the state governments.

Annual expence of civil list in each state; interest on debt not assumed; improvements in inland navigation and roads; poor rates; city taxes; contributions to clergy, and public buildings,	2,000,000
	6,000,000

Which may be raised in the following manner, viz.

For the general government.

Impost, including the additional duties and tonnage, Excise, or duty on rum and other spirits imported, or distilled within the United States,	3,200,000
	800,000
	4,000,000

For the state governments.

Tax on carriages,	
Tax on Slaves,	
Tax on horses, cattle, sheep, and other animals,	
Tax on monies at interest,	
Tax on professions and stock in trade,	
Tax on houses and town lots,	
Tax on land,	
Tax on law proceedings,	
Tax on collateral legacies,	

And the States may devise many others, if some one or other of these do not suit their purpose. One advantage may arise from this divided mode of taxation, viz. an equalizing of the burthens of all the people of the State; for if the system of taxation adopted by the general government should fall partially on any description of persons, the state legislature may collect the necessary revenue for state purposes, from those on whom the general revenue does not fall.

Domestic debt,		
19,000,000 6 pr. cents.	—	1,140,000
14,000,000 3 pr. cents.	—	420,000
		2,160,000
For 1792,		
Foreign debt,	—	600,000
29,000,000 6 pr. cents.	—	1,740,000
21,000,000 3 pr. cents.	—	630,000

Total annual interest until 1801, 2,970,000

Some part of the domestic debt has been discharged in the course of the last year, perhaps as much as 300,000 dollars, the annual interest of which, and the interest on all other sums which may be hereafter discharged, becomes an augmentation to the sinking fund.

The whole debt of the United States is about — — — 75,000,000

What the debts due by the several States will be, after the assumption, is difficult to say, but at most cannot exceed — — — 10,000,000

85,000,000

The whole territory of the United States, is 1,000,000 square miles.

That part which is granted to individuals, or which the United States, or particular States, have a right to grant, may be computed at five hundred thousand square miles, or 320,000,000 acres—which is 80 acres to each soul.

On the idea that the land is bound to pay the whole debt, every square acre is mortgaged for about 14 cents; but if only that part which is already in possession of the United States, and several States, be taken into view, then every square acre will be mortgaged for about 28 cents, and admitting that every acre of land, on an average, is worth five dollars, it will then be pledged for only one eighteenth part of its value.

If we look among the European governments for such as are nearest in extent to our own, we shall find France and Germany, together with Spain, nearly equal to our present territory in possession; but when we contemplate the whole extent of our territory, we shall find it nearly equal to France, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Switzerland, Spain, Great Britain and Ireland, Italy, Portugal, and Turkey in Europe.

It is said that the debt of Great-Britain is nearly equal to one half the value of the whole property of the people—whether in land, cash, ships, stock on lands, produce, manufactures, plate, jewels, furniture, or the royal navy and implements of war.

If we compute the value of the several heads as they respect the United States, perhaps the following may be nearly the truth, viz. *Dolls.*

300,000,000 acres land, at 5 dollars on an average (including all the cities)	—	1,500,000,000
Cash of the United States,	—	10,000,000
Merchant ships of the United States, including coasters,	—	20,000,000
Stock on the lands, and necessary implements of husbandry, boats, waggons and geers,	—	5,000,000
Value of produce and manufactures exported and for home consumption,	—	65,000,000
Plate, jewels and furniture,	—	5,000,000
700,000 slaves may be valued at	—	75,000,000
		1,680,000,000

Beside which is the right of pre-emption to the land in possession of the Indians, and the vessels and warlike stores belonging to the United States and the several States.

Say the debt of the United States and the several States, foreign and domestic, is 85,000,000, then the proportion between the value of the whole property and the debt will be about twenty to one, and the ability of the people of the United States to pay their debt, is ten times greater than that of the people of Great-Britain.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

FRIDAY, Jan. 14.

IN committee of the whole on the bill to determine the time when the electors of President and Vice-President shall be chosen, and when they shall meet and give in their votes.

Mr. Bowdoin in the chair.

A motion by Mr. Smith, (S. C.) to strike out a clause in the first section, which referred to vacancies happening from special contingencies, after a short discussion was disagreed to.

Mr. Benson, who was of the committee which reported the bill, then stated the reasons which influenced the committee in the arrangement of

the times of choosing the electors, and their giving in their votes.

Mr. Sedgwick said he supposed, that the design of the provision on this subject in the constitution, was to prevent, as far as possible, the practices of corruption and intrigue in the business of election: To effect this salutary object, he thought it necessary that the time of choosing electors should be fixed, and that as short a period as possible should be suffered to elapse, between the time of choosing, and the time when the electors should give in their votes; the bill, said he, proposes eight weeks—he thought that too long a period.

Mr. Benson observed that the term of eight weeks was thought not more than sufficient to accommodate the circumstances of some of the States—a shorter period might have suited others—but the idea of uniformity, rendered it necessary to fix on a particular period.

Mr. Goodhue objected to assigning one particular day for all the States, as, he observed, the modes of election in the several States are different: In some the electors are chosen immediately by the people at large; in others they are chosen by the state legislatures; this will render it extremely difficult to comply with the law, if they are to be chosen on one and the same day throughout the Union.

Mr. Carroll said, that it appeared to him necessary in the first place, to determine who shall choose the electors: For his part he was fully convinced, that this power is exclusively vested in the people by the Constitution.

Mr. Jackson observed, that the difficulties mentioned by the gentleman from Massachusetts, would accrue from fixing on a particular day in the State of Georgia; there the electors are chosen by the legislature, which meets at a particular season of the year: This clause will render too sessions necessary, which would be exceedingly inconvenient: He moved therefore that the clause which appoints a particular day when the electors shall be chosen, should be struck out, and that the time when they shall meet and give in their votes should only be designated: This motion was seconded.

Mr. Giles said that he conceived but one mode of choosing electors was contemplated by the constitution; the state legislatures he thought ought not to choose them—they ought to be chosen by the people. He adverted to the Constitution—the words are, "That each State shall choose, &c." This plainly implies that the legislatures are not authorized to exercise that power themselves: Congress has a power to say when they shall be chosen—this imposes a necessity for one mode, and that the mode should be uniform, and be by the people; for the legislatures, from the different circumstances of the States must meet at different periods: He wished this point to be settled—He thought the people ought to choose the electors.

Mr. Jackson contended that the power was left discretionary with the state legislatures.

Mr. Goodhue said, this was plainly the case, by the express words of the constitution.

Mr. Ames moved that the clause should be amended, so as to include the words of the constitution "in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct."

This was seconded by Mr. Stone.

Mr. Livermore was also in favor of the motion.

Mr. Madison said, a question arose here, which was, whether the power of Congress extends to determining the manner of choosing, by virtue of possessing the power of determining the time of their being chosen;—he was however disposed to think that the best idea was that suggested by the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. Sedgwick said, he was in favor of the motion of the gentleman from Georgia—and in this view of the subject—he was opposed to the opinion of the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. Giles] as interfering with the legislative rights of the several states.

Mr. Tucker was opposed to the idea of a particular interference of the general Government, in respect to the time, and mode of choosing the electors—He wished therefore that the motion for striking out the words, should obtain; if that was done he should move a clause to this purport, that the electors shall be constitutionally chosen.

Mr. Lawrence was in favor of leaving the time of choosing to the several state legislatures—a general regulation could not be agreed upon, which would not involve the difficulty that gentleman appeared solicitous to guard against, and that was the opportunity which would necessarily be given for caballing—in consequence of the great extent of some states, and the confined limits of others—it appears therefore said he, absolutely necessary to leave the time of choosing to the state legislatures, and this will put it in their power to reduce the interval between choosing and voting, in such manner as circumstances may dictate, to prevent the inconveniences contemplated.

Mr. Giles said, he believed he had been misunderstood, he did not mean to invade the rights of the state legislatures—so far from that, he was