

Worchester January 27<sup>th</sup> 1791.

[—766—]

FOR THE GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES.

### CONGRESS.

IT was a prudent caution of the Egyptians, to postpone the giving a character till after the death of the party. During a man's life his conduct might change, and falsify the praise or censure bestowed upon it. But death, which fixes an unalterable stamp, extinguishes the passions which have flattered, or abused, the living man. Tomorrow the first Congress will terminate its political life. Its whole conduct is before the public; subject to such a decision, as truth will pronounce upon it.

Other public men have found the path of their duty as beaten as the highway. Administration running in the same channel for ages, has worn it deep and wide: Congress had a new path to tread; the constitution, by fencing it up on either side, has made it a narrow one; and such was the state of the times, and of parties, that they found it covered with thorns.

During the two years, Congress has been engaged in business about 16 months. The book of its laws will shew that it has been diligently engaged. Perhaps no body of men has ever attended more punctually at the daily hours of meeting, or continued more closely occupied during the sitting. The whole number has generally voted. This however is an inferior kind of merit. The great point which affects the reputation of the body is, whether its measures have been wise and salutary.

The first care of Congress, was to organize the great departments of government. The merit of the measure may be tried by supposing a different organization. If instead of a Secretary of the Treasury, the business of finance had been intrusted to a Treasury Board, of three or five persons, let their good sense and integrity be ever so unquestionable, it may be doubted whether an uniform self consistent plan would have been recommended or adopted. It is proper to try the merit of the first Congress, either by the difference of the state of things, when it began, and when it finished its period, or by comparing what Congress has done, with the manner of doing the like things in the state legislatures. Leaving it to the mind of every reader to pursue these ideas as far as he may think proper, it may be remarked, that Congress has so organized the great departments, as to secure an orderly, efficient and uniform administration of the government. The President with his usual prudence and discernment has appointed able men to fill them; who are stimulated, by every motive, to a diligent and active employment of their eminent talents. The people will know where to bestow praise, and on whom the blame should fall. This is the advantage of establishing heads of departments.

Provision is also made for a friendly intercourse with foreign nations, by providing for Ministers.

In the judicial department, as much has been done, as circumstances would admit. Judges of eminent virtue and learning preside in the federal courts. But the very narrow limits of the judicial power of the United States, renders this one of the most difficult branches of legislation. Courts must be established, and provision made to administer justice to men, almost at home, and yet the business is very inconsiderable. This is not the fault of Congress. If any thing is to be regretted, it is, that a different arrangement had not been made of the judicial power by the constitution.

The measures of Congress have given a great spring to trade. The difference of tonnage and of impost on goods, if imported in American vessels, and the favours to the trade to India and China, have greatly increased the shipping, as well as the foreign trade. The coasting trade, no longer subject to State regulations is evidently gaining strength. It has increased the tonnage and seamen—it is already a young lion, and will afford

in a few years such naval strength, as to be a terror to our enemies.

The duties on foreign manufactures are a direct bounty upon our own. The increase of manufactures since Congress first imposed the duties, is not certainly known. But every one who has lived in the country the last two years, knows that it is very extraordinary. Our exports have increased to upwards of 20 millions of dollars.—Many are of opinion, that our manufactures have risen to an equal amount.

Future controversies between the States are rendered improbable, by the provision for an equitable settlement of the accounts, which the war had swelled into a mass, formidable by its magnitude, and more so by its confusion. This very difficult and necessary task has been accomplished, tho it had been despaired of by many.

The States have been eased of their debts, which would have crushed some of them by their weight. But the revenue of the whole country, under one system of management, will enable the United States to provide for them, almost without feeling the burden. Moderate taxes on luxuries have made the revenue chest overflow with wealth.

The advantages of the funding system, are not to be enumerated. America, at this moment, is in a situation equally novel and respectable.—It is in a condition for self-defence, which cannot be too much admired. With an orderly government, an ample revenue, and almost unlimited credit and resources, it possesses a strength, which it stood in need of during the war. Popular governments suffer more by the unsteadiness of their measures, than by the corruption of their rulers. It is the first time that a permanent system has been adopted in our country for supporting credit. The people already enjoy the fruits of it. The new capital is every where flying to the aid of manufactures, trade and agriculture.

The Bank is an institution which our extensive and wealthy country ought not to be without. It will assist us to extend our intercourse from North to South, and we shall like one another better, as we know one another more.

After every pacific measure had failed of effect with the Indians, protection is afforded to the frontiers—Our frontier fellow-citizens, tho distant, are not neglected.

It would be tedious to comment at large on the several very important acts of the first Congress. A mere sketch is intended. A great deal has been done, and truth seems to authorize us to say, that no very dangerous mistakes have been committed in the two years. America, which was in the shade before, seems now to stand in the sun-shine. Its prospects are the brightest that any nation on earth enjoys: All that is wanting to realize them is STEADINESS. If the next Congress should make no violent alteration of measures, our hopes can scarcely meet with disappointment.

The great questions have called forth strong passions in Congress, it is a most grateful thing to see the harmony and mutual good understanding, which subsist at the end of the two years of its being. Opposition seems to have left no sting behind it. The Members will separate with an high degree of personal regard and esteem.—State prejudices and prepossessions lose a great part of their influence on the mind, when those who at first felt them, find themselves obliged to acknowledge, on numberless occasions, the candor, patriotism, and high sense of rectitude and honor, which distinguish their opponents. The ties of brotherhood and mutual affection, which are to bind America together, ought to grow stronger every day.

Hon. JOHN B. ASHE, JOHN STEELE and NATHANIEL MACON, are elected Members of the second House of Representatives of the United States for the State of North-Carolina.



### CONGRESS.

IN SENATE, Feb. 25.

ON motion, That the following resolution be entered into, to wit:

Resolved, That it be a standing rule, that the doors of the Senate chamber remain open, whilst the Senate shall be sitting in a legislative capacity, except on such occasions as in their judgment may require secrecy, and that this rule shall commence and be in force on the first day of the next session of Congress.

The yeas and nays were required by one fifth of the Senators present.

YEAS.

Messrs. Butler, Foster, Gunn, Hawkins, King, Lee, Maclay, Monroe.—9.

NAYS.

Messrs. Bassett, Carroll, Dalton, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Elmer, Few, Henry, Johnson, Johnson, Izard, Langdon, Morris, Read, Stanton, Strong, Wingate.—17. So it passed in the negative.

A message was received from the President of the United States, informing the Senate that he had this day approved and signed the bill, entitled, "An act to incorporate the subscribers to the bank of the United States," and the bill, entitled, "An act regulating the number of Representatives to be chosen by the States of Kentucky and Vermont."

The bill entitled, "An act fixing the time for the next annual meeting of Congress," was read the second time, and ordered, that it pass to the third reading.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

SATURDAY, Feb. 26.

A message from the Senate, by Mr. Otis their Secretary, informed the house that they have passed the bill supplementary to the act incorporating the subscribers to the Bank of the United States.

A second message from the Senate, informed that they have passed a bill in amendment to the act for fixing the temporary and permanent seat of government of the United States, to which they request the concurrence of this house; which bill was read a first time, and laid on the table.

Mr. Sedgwick from the committee, to whom was referred the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, on the petition of Comfort Sands, and others, brought in a report which was read and laid on the table.

Mr. Trumbull from the committee, appointed for the purpose, reported a bill in addition to an act entitled, "an act for establishing the salaries of the executive officers of government, with their assistants and clerks, which was received and read a first and second time, and referred to a committee of the whole house, on Monday next.

The petition of Elias Hasket Derby, praying relief in the payment of duties on goods imported from India and China, was read and referred to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Information was received from the Members of the Philosophical Society, that an eulogium as a tribute to the memory of their late President, Doctor BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, will be delivered on Tuesday next, at the German church, at which they request the attendance of the members of this house.

The house, agreeable to the order of the day, proceeded to the consideration of the reports on sundry petitions.

The report of the committee on the petition of Capt. Seth Harding was taken up for a second reading; and on the question to agree to the same, it passed in the negative.

Reports upon a number of other petitions were agreed to by the house.

A report from the Secretary at War, on the petition of Capt. David Cook was agreed to by the house, and a committee appointed to bring in a bill conformable thereto—

After which the gallery doors were shut.

MONDAY, Feb. 28.

The bill to amend the act, for establishing the temporary and permanent seat of government, received from the Senate, was read the second time, and ordered for a third reading to-morrow.

A message from the Senate by Mr. Secretary Otis, informed the house that the Senate concur in their vote, by which, the report of the joint committee of conference on the subject of disagreement between the two houses, in respect to the 61st section of the bill, laying duties on distilled spirits, was adopted—He also informed the house that the Senate have passed the bill for fixing the time of the next annual meeting of Congress.

Another message informed the house that the