

MR. FENNO,

WITH pleasure we must read, that among other things stipulated with Mr. Jay by the English cabinet, is the manumission of our distressed brethren in Algiers. Let no ever dilatoriness and even total neglect in this business may take place (a thing not very improbable, judging from that nation's former conduct towards us) and considering that the importance of the occasion demands promptness of execution (for what, fellow-citizens, can be worse than Algerine slavery) an individual wishes to enquire, what progress has been made by the Committee appointed a few months ago for this purpose?—A degree of ardor and benevolence was then displayed worthy of the American character; but of late we hear nothing on the subject. Remember, that while we are at ease in our persons and property, and our minds only agitated now and then with a few perturbations arising from the situation of our country, they are hourly groaning under the chains of slavery, the stripes of cruelty, and the yoke of servitude. Put the case to yourselves, and let it spur you on to diligence in their redemption. Have the subscriptions been filled, or are persons now employed in collecting them? If so, and an adequate sum raised, Have the Committees appointed for that purpose sent on, or are they preparing to send on the purchase money of the liberty, I believe, of some hundreds of our fellow-citizens? Surely humanity, justice, love of country, demand that these things be enquired into, and that the real state of the business be known, that if things are not yet in a train of accomplishment, citizens may now again at this moment recollect their vigour, and carry measures to effect; if they are, that they may enjoy the heart-consoling satisfaction of having rescued from slavery and death an useful body of American Citizens.

HUMANITAS.

Legislature of Pennsylvania.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, September 11.

The following is an accurate statement of the observations made by Mr. White, on the motion for the appointment of a committee to bring in a bill authorizing the Governor to complete the quota of militia required from this state by accepting voluntary enrolments, and to provide bounties for such volunteers.

MR. SPEAKER,

As we are convened by the Governor on account of the late disturbances in the western country, I conceive it will not be disagreeable to the members of this house to hear the several causes and circumstances of those disturbances stated to them, and as the resolution now under consideration contemplates an awful appeal to arms for their suppression, I hope I shall be indulged so far as to be permitted to make the statement I have alluded to.

MR. SPEAKER,

I have risen from my seat in order to state to this house, the reasons which have excited that part of my constituents who are citizens of the western counties of this commonwealth, to oppose such part of the revenue laws of the United States, as demand a duty on spiritous liquors of their own manufacture, and for their own consumption. The reasons are various, but as many of them as I am able, I shall communicate in as few words, as my abilities will admit of. In the first place then, we lived in a new country, and many of the necessities of life could not be had nearer than the trading towns on the eastern side of the mountains, which great distance of land carriage, made it impracticable for us to procure them with the produce of our farms; therefore to these places we were compelled to send our money, which greatly diminished our stock in hand. The land office was another channel through which our money was conveyed into the treasury of this commonwealth, and from thence very little ever returned to us again, so that we were left bare of cash, and the greatest number of us who had not land, were unable to buy, and were prevented from settling north-west of the rivers Ohio and Alleghany, by laws that provided against any man holding land there by improvement, and the men who attempted to build and improve, were driven off by armed men and their houses burned with fire. The people thus prevented from taking up lands, were anxious to enter into some kind of business, to procure money, or other property, wherewith to buy; and as whisky, &c. were more portable than any other produce of our country, many of the people entered into that branch of business, so that it became general, that when any thing was sold, it was stipulated that the payment should be made in whisky; thus for want of money whisky became the circulating currency of that country, and many of the

intentions of settling over the rivers Ohio and Alleghany, thus the population was prevented, and a very spacious and valuable tract of country left uninhabited, through which, the hostile Indians made frequent depredations on the inhabitants of our frontiers; and we were compelled to defend them, without receiving an adequate return for our services, which when we failed to perform, a fine was exacted which generally amounted to more than a six fold tax. A draught was lately made out of each company of the militia, and orders given to them to arm and equip themselves fit for military operations, and to be ready to march at a moment's warning.

Our citizens found that they were liable to be ordered into public service for three months at a time, without receiving one third part of the value of their services, and at the caprice of their officers, to act as well on the offensive, as the defensive or to be stationed at some place, where they could be of no service, at which the people were fretted and foured in their minds; and at that critical moment the marshal of the district came with precepts to enforce the collection of the excise, with all its arrears, which was out of the power of the persons concerned to pay; and summoned them to appear at the next Federal Court, where they could not have the benefit of trial by a jury of their own country. The people then began to converse one with another, and to murmur against the general government, saying, was not this one of the reasons that Congress have given for rejecting the King's government; namely, the transporting us beyond the seas, to be tried at his court for pretended offences; now the Judiciary of the United States have summoned us over the mountains, to be tried at the Federal Court. Another reason they have assigned was, that the King had endeavored to prevent the population of these states, &c. Have not Congress and the state of Pennsylvania also prevented the population of land northwest of the rivers Ohio and Alleghany, by not suffering us first to seat ourselves thereon, and hold them by improvement till we could get money to take out office rights for them? these are privileges we did enjoy in settling lands south east of the rivers Ohio and Alleghany, as well under the commonwealth as the proprietors of Pennsylvania. Although the Congress of the United States have laid a duty on spiritous liquors of our own manufacture, not excepting that for our own consumption, it does not therefore and although it was constitutional, we conceive it was a wanton exercise of their constitutional powers, inasmuch as it is a violation of the rights, liberties, and happiness of the people of the nation; for if one article of our own manufacture may be considered as an article for revenue, another may be considered in the same predicament, and the rule will hold good should Congress see proper, to encrease the number of articles for revenue, till a duty is laid on our cyder, beer, grain, cattle, horses, windows, hearths, spinning-wheels, &c. which would subject us to every oppression, that England, Ireland and other European countries are compelled to suffer.

And if it is our duty to be contented in that situation, we may then say, welcome slavery, under the galling yoke of tyrants, farewell happiness, farewell freedom and felicity; we must now take our last long look of liberty. Was it for this that we rejected the king of Great Britain; were the sons of America inspired with noble minds, and were they in the right, when they refused to pay a duty on the tea, and carried their resentment so high, that they consumed it with fire; far be it from us to say, that Congress shall not do this, we know there must be a revenue to support the government of the United States, and think it right that it should be raised not only on the tea, but upon every other foreign manufacture, and whenever these shall be found insufficient, that an equitable tax on our lands &c. shall supply the deficiency. But will not any candid statesman, who is fully acquainted with the amount of revenue which may be raised on articles imported, without any other resource whatsoever, say, that was no more given to the public officers and servants of government than an equitable compensation for their services, it would be fully sufficient in time of peace, to support the government of the United States; and more than would be used, were they as sparing in the wages of Congress, and other officers of government, as they are penurious in allowing wages to those worthy citizens who are devoted to move forth into the field of battle, to ward off the blow directed at the life of the defenceless citizen. Shall these brave heroes and

guardians of our lives at the risque of their own, be thus slighted, or poorly compensated for their services, with three dollars per month, and shall six dollars per day be lavished on a Congress man, three upon an Assemblyman, two thousand pounds per year upon a governor, upon three officers in the land office department 500 pounds each per annum, and upon the comptroller general, register general, and treasurer of the commonwealth, five hundred pounds each per annum, shall a 1000 pounds a year be paid to the judge of the supreme court, 600 each to his associates, and five hundred pounds per annum to each of the district judges? Is it right that such sums of money as these should be paid to individuals for their services when the very staff of life is stretched from the indigent citizen, the widow and the fatherless orphan, even the bread on which they should feed, and the cows that should give them milk, to sell and procure these large sums of money. And yet these are not so extravagant as the prices paid to the officers of the United States, a part of which we shall now enumerate, viz. to the President of the United States 25,000 dollars per annum, to the Vice-President 5000, to the Secretary of the Treasury 3,500, to the Treasurer 2,400, to the Auditor 1,900, Register 1,740, Secretary at War 3000, judge of the supreme court 4000, and to each of the associate judges 3500 dollars per annum.

Is it right for the President of the United States to receive 68 dollars per day, to sit in honor's easy chair, and but 36 dollars each for one whole year's service be given to the men who are destined to stand as marks for the roaring cannon, to wade through the gore, and leap over the heaps of carnage, or fall in its ruins, by the intrepid valour of some fierce European foe; or worn down with fatigue and toil exposed to all weathers and the well aimed shot of the savage warriors, which should they survive, the greatest number of them will still feel to the end of their lives. View the brave soldier with his constitution thus impaired, or perhaps ruined, see him return to his young and helpless family, or into that stage of life where it is right to acquire one, despised by many whose lives and property he has preserved, neglected and forgotten by the United States and all others, and left to breathe out the rest of his days in want and misery; where is the humane thinking man among us, who is a friend to equal laws and equitable compensations, be he where he will this when laid naked to his view will cause the very blood in his veins to run chill, and his heart burn with indignation. This is not all, if he returns a hale man he must become a tenant to some Congress-man, salary officer or other engrosser of large quantities of land, unto whom the United States or the state of Pennsylvania have sold it; it was to them that exorbitant sums of money for their services were paid, and therefore they were able to buy. Was it right for thousands and tens of thousands of acres of land north west of the river Ohio and Alleghany to be sold to an individual, while hundreds of thousands of others, who though worthy citizens, by partial laws if I may term them such are rendered unable to buy and are in want of plantations, whereon to raise their families, and would immediately settle those lands, and if not otherwise defended, would defend themselves against the savage, or other enemy, and would soon through industry and care pay up the price of their lands with its interest; this would bring more into the public funds, and the western defence would then be less expensive. Then would we, who are inhabitants of the western counties, no longer be obliged to leave our families to suffer, and our rising and ripening crops to destruction, while we are dragged from our farms to defend the speculators' lands; while the greatest number of the owners are in Philadelphia and other interior places, living at ease and luxury; was it just and wise in Congress thus to make hundreds rich by leaving millions in abject poverty and slavery. We trust, Mr. Speaker, that you will view these measures, in the same light that the author of the rights of man does. He asserts that it is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature; a vast mass of mankind are degradedly thrown into the back ground of the human picture, to bring forward with greater glare, the puppet show of state and aristocracy.

Was not that a cruel and oppressive law which demanded of a part of our citizens an excise and arrears thereof for three years past, on spiritous liquors of their own manufacture, such a number of large sums of money, that from the most accurate calculation we could make

or procure, had all the persons in the four western counties together with the persons concerned, gone forward to the marshal, exciseman, or other receiving officer, with all the money they possessed and put it into his coffers, it would not have amounted to half the demand, and had the people complied thus far, what must have followed; the sequel is obvious, the whole property of the persons concerned, would have been put to sale and as no person there, would have had money to buy with, a number of the salary officers of government, together with the marshal, excisemen, and other men of affluence, would have gone from the eastern parts of the state, and have purchased up all their estates, at perhaps one fiftieth part of the value, and those citizens being stripped of their property must have become tenants to these great accumulators of wealth, the purchasers. Mr. Speaker I have now stated as far as I was able to the members of this house, the local situation, ideas and sentiments, of my constituents in the western country, and I have no doubt of their finding some redress in a proper channel, and I hope it will extend as far as it is right and just, as well by the legislature of the United States, as this state, and that the members of this house whose local situation will admit of it, will be at some pains in removing any mistaken ideas that may have taken place; and further I confide, that every member on the floor of this house, will take their grievances into their most serious consideration; and think what part they would take if the case was their own. I hope they will think with me, that these people having a sense of all these injuries, revolving in corroding and inflaming their minds till they are worked up to a pitch, have made no greater opposition to so dangerous a law as that which would compel our citizens to pay a duty on any article they make themselves, for their own use, than any other virtuous citizens would have done, had they been in their situation; and confiding in the wisdom, coolness and deliberation of the members of this house, I hope and trust they will say, that there is not sufficient cause for the legislature of Pennsylvania at present to provide any military preparations to go against the inhabitants of the western country; or give any greater energy to the laws on their account, lest we should be necessary in destroying the live of many thousands, and their blood cry against us, which would leave a lasting stigma on the United States, as well as this commonwealth; but let us postpone this business till the Congress of the United States shall be assembled in November next, unto whom these people will petition for a redress of grievances, and I trust that that august body, in their wisdom, will give redress in every measure, that is just and expedient; at least so far that an amicable union will take place, as well in every other part of the union, as the one alluded to. And for the uprightness of my intentions, I appeal to an omnipresent God, by whose assistance I trust, that we being thus united, shall be able to defend ourselves against any enemy we have on the globe, or all of them together, were they to unite and invade us.

Before I had gone more than half through with the above address, I was interrupted more than once by one or other of the members, who addressed the chair requesting that I should not be suffered to proceed; however the house was still disposed to let me go on: but on my proceeding, one of the members from York county made a further objection. I found that the house was not in a temper at that time for receiving any favorable impressions by hearing the sentiments of the western people and thought it best to stop before I had finished the above statement, and proceeded more immediately to the resolution under consideration by addressing the speaker to the following purport.

Although there appear to be some persons in the western counties of this commonwealth who are not well affected to some of the existing laws of the United States, yet we find by the public papers that there are a much greater number who are willing to accede to the proposals made by the commissioners of government and who will use their influence to bring the people into a knowledge that the only way that a redress can be obtained is by a petition to the congress of the United States. I therefore move that the further consideration of the resolution now before the house be postponed until Congress shall be assembled. This motion was seconded by Mr. Blair—the motion, however, for postponement was lost, and the resolution, after some time spent in debate, was adopted.

And now as my last effort for the safety of my sinking country, at the hazard of, perhaps more than my repu-

tation, I submit this to the press just as it is. Haply it may draw one sympathizing reflection from the legislative or executive department of this state or the United States in their favor, so as to delay the intended wreck, until they can be heard by the Congress of the United States, which I trust would bring about a reconciliation.

BENJAMIN WHITE.

UNITED STATES.

PITTSBURGH, September 10.

Resolves of the Committee at Redstone.

RESOLVED, That it is the opinion of this committee, that it is the interest of the people of this country to accede to the proposals made by the commissioners on the side of the union and of the State of Pennsylvania.

Resolved, That the committee to be appointed to confer with the commissioners on the part of the United States and of the State of Pennsylvania, with instruction, to said committee to try to obtain from said commissioners such further modification in their proposals as they think will be more agreeable to the people at large, and also to represent the necessity of granting further time to the people before their final determination is required.

Resolved, That the said committee shall publish and communicate through the several counties the day on which the sense of the people is to be taken.

Resolved, That on the day published, the following question shall be submitted to the citizens duly qualified to vote, of the counties of Westmoreland, Washington, Fayette, Allegheny and that part of Bedford county which lies west of the Allegheny mountains, in Pennsylvania, and of Ohio county in Virginia—Question, Will the people submit to the laws of the United States upon the terms proposed by the commissioners of the United States.

Resolved, That the members of this committee for each county shall determine the manner in which the sense of the people shall be taken in their respective counties.

Resolved, That the determination of the inhabitants of each county shall be communicated to a committee, to consist of one member from each county, who shall meet for that purpose at Parkinson's ferry within two days after the sense of the people shall be taken, and shall transmit the general resolutions to the commissioners of government.

We lay before our readers the foregoing proceedings of the standing committee at Redstone, which gave rise to the following correspondence between the commissioners of the United States and the new committee of conference.

Pittsburgh, Sept. 1, 1794.

Gentlemen,

The committee appointed by the committee of safety at Redstone the 23d August last, to confer with the commissioners of the United States and State of Pennsylvania, and agreeable to the resolution of said committee, do request:

1st. That the said commissioners do give an assurance, on the part of the general government, of an indemnity to all persons as to the arrearage of excise, that have not entered their bills to this date.

2d. Will the commissioners aforesaid give to the eleventh day of October next, to take the sense of the people at large of the four counties west of Pennsylvania, and that part of Bedford west of the Allegheny mountains, and the Ohio county in Virginia, whether they will accede to the resolution of the said commissioners as stated at large in the conference with the committee of conference met at Pittsburgh, the 21st of August last.

By order of the Committee,

JOHN MCCLELLAND.

The honorable the Commissioners on the part of the United States and of the State of Pennsylvania.

Pittsburgh, Sept. 1, 1794.

Gentlemen,

We have received your letter of this date; and as time presses, have determined to give it an immediate answer, although we shall be prevented thereby, from making so full and correct a reply, as the importance of the subject requires.

In our correspondence with the late committee of conference, we detailed those assurances of submission to the laws, which would have been deemed full and satisfactory, and which were necessary to the exercise of the powers vested in us. This detail was minutely settled in a conference with a sub-committee of that body. From a desire on our part to accommodate and to render the proposals as unexceptionable as possible, they were altered and modified at their request, till being superior to all exception, they received the unanimous approbation of those gentlemen.

The detail thus settled, required from the standing committee assurances of their explicit determination to submit to the laws of the United States; that they would not directly or indirectly oppose the execution of the acts for raising a revenue upon distilled spirits and stills, and that they would support, as far as the laws require, the civil authority, in affording the protection due to all officers and other citizens. These assurances have not been given. On the contrary, we learn with emotions, difficult to be repressed, that in the meeting of the committee at Redstone, re-