

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Thursday, December 4, 1794.

Motion for a vote of thanks to General Wayne and the army under his command.

Mr. W. SMITH wished to make his promised motion, which he prefaced by observing that he had varied it at the request of several gentlemen. In the original motion he had particularly noticed the diligence of the General in disciplining his army to the nature of the service in which they were engaged, and his fortitude and perseverance in encountering the difficulties which opposed his march thro' a wilderness.

Tho' he and many others were ready to acknowledge in the fullest manner the merits of the General in those important particulars, yet as they were not matters of general notoriety, and as unanimity on an occasion like the present was extremely desirable, he had now confined the motion to the brilliant action of the 20th August.

Mr. Smith was ready to admit that there was no precedent on their journals for a vote of thanks to the army; but it was not to be thence inferred that the measure was improper: unfortunately no success had occurred since the establishment of the present government which called for this testimony of public gratitude.

There were indeed on the journals votes of thanks to the Speakers of the House, and there was a vote, on the death of Dr. Franklin, expressive of his services, both of which cases might be considered as bearing some analogy to the present, tho' not precisely similar.

Under the former government innumerable circumstances might be quoted. With respect to the practice in itself, he had no doubt of its propriety. He considered this kind of remuneration as a just and merited reward for past services and an honorable excitement to future exertions. Those who performed them were, in his opinion, entitled to the gratitude of their fellow-citizens, which could be no otherwise publicly expressed than thro' their constitutional organ, the representatives of the people. When they had this claim, to withhold that public expression was to be unjust. Satisfied then as he was, that General Wayne and the army under his command had deserved well of their country, had performed signal and splendid services, from which he anticipated very important advantages, he could not suppress the desire of applause.

He was aware it might be said the House had already in their answer to the President's speech bore ample testimony to the good conduct of the army and that it was unnecessary to go farther; but that was only a communication between the House and the President, and was not addressed to the army: a vote of thanks would be formally transmitted to the army, would be considered as an expression of the sensibility of the House, and would, he was persuaded, be highly gratifying to the gallant General and his brave army. Mr. Smith said he felt a peculiar pleasure in making this motion, as he had on a former occasion found it his duty to make the motion which declared the vacancy of General Wayne's seat in that House, a circumstance which had given him considerable pain at the time, but which had proved a fortunate event, as an opportunity was thereby afforded the General of serving his country in the field.

Mr. Smith concluded with saying, that as he had no doubt the services of the army had made the same impression on the House as they had on him, he trusted the motion he was about to make would be honored with an unanimous vote. He then moved the three resolutions—(see Saturday's Gazette.)

Mr. Giles foresaw many bad consequences that might ensue from the practice of giving opinions of men. One part of the House might be for a vote of thanks, and the other against it. He should vote for the proposition, but wished that some mode might be adopted for expressing the general opinion of the house against the practice.

Mr. Kittera was for restoring the clause respecting the vigilance of Gen. Wayne in attending to the discipline of his troops.

Mr. Hillhouse hoped that the resolutions would not be adopted. He should go farther than the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Giles) and vote against them. The house, in their answer to the President, had expressed their approbation, and that was enough. It was not the business of that House, but of the executive, to express such things. Mr. Hillhouse had voted most cordially

for that part of the address respecting the Western army. The answer to the Speech of the President would always afford a good opportunity of conveying these kind of matters. It would immediately become necessary to give thanks in every case; and not to give them will be regarded as an implied censure. He trusted that the gentleman would withdraw his motion, and that the house in this way would get rid of it. He had, and he repeated it again, a high sense of the merit of the officers and soldiers of the army under General Wayne, but he had said so already in the address to the President. It had been urged, as a precedent for this measure, that it was usual to thank the Speaker. This was a mere ceremony. He wished that it had never come into practice, but since it had been so, he should always agree to the vote of thanks.

Mr. Murray thought that we might trust that the House would always have too much prudence to abuse their thanks, by giving them improperly. By way of precedent, Mr. Murray read a vote of the State of Virginia, thanking Gov. Lee for his conduct in the western insurrection.

Mr. Nicholas approved highly of the conduct of the troops, but it was only an act of duty. If we send soldiers against the Indians it is supposed that they will stand to their posts, otherwise the government cannot be supported even for a month.

Mr. Hillhouse saw no business which the house had with the proceedings in the State of Virginia. It had been hinted, that the army under General Wayne might feel disagreeably if the resolution should be rejected. With that Mr. Hillhouse had no business, he acted on principles, without regarding the feelings of individuals.

Mr. W. Smith agreed with gentlemen that the principal object of the house was to legislate; but it did not follow that they were to be confined merely to legislation. Every legislative body exercised the right of opinion, in cases where no act was to follow. This house has frequently exercised it; the answers to the President's speech—the answer to the King of the French on his acceptance of the constitution of 91, the opinion of the house on the merits of that constitution, the vote respecting Benjamin Franklin—the vote of last Session, in reply to a letter from the Committee of Public Safety of France, the votes of thanks to the Speakers—were precedents on the Journals which refuted a contrary doctrine. It had been said that the latter case was a mere matter of form; Mr. S. thought differently, and if ever he was in that house when a vote of thanks should be proposed to a Speaker who had no claim to it, he should feel it his duty to oppose it.—Gentlemen apprehended that this practice might lead to innumerable difficulties hereafter. But every house would exercise its judgment and discretion; members would not be so rash as to propose the thanks of the house where serious opposition was expected, nor would the thanks be voted unless well merited. He was unwilling as any member to make the thanks of the house too cheap, but all must confess that if ever there was an occasion where they were properly called for, this was one. To deny the right or expediency of the practice was in fact to strip the house of one of its most agreeable functions, that of expressing its gratitude.

It had been advanced as an objection that the two houses might differ; one might vote thanks and the other censure in the same case; but that might happen in other cases where the propriety of expressing an opinion was admitted; in answering the President's speech, in the State Legislatures where thanks were frequently voted, the two branches might differ: that was never deemed an objection to the practice; each house expressed its individual opinion.

Mr. Smith said if the house had been sitting in September last when the account arrived of this victory, would the members have then felt as coldly as they now do? No—he was convinced that in the moment of joy and gratitude they would have unanimously voted thanks to the army without the least hesitation; but they have since had time to cool and the impression is worn away.

Gentlemen should consider the hard services of that army, how badly paid they were, the nature of the country they were in, and then determine whether the brilliant action of the 20th August is to go unrewarded? To appreciate truly the merits of that army in obtaining so signal a victory, let the House reflect on the consequences of a defeat: the army disbanded and broken up, the frontiers exposed to the ferocious savages, the combination of the tribes more cemented and formidable, an expensive, long and bloody war: what is now our prospect? the frontiers protected, the combination of the tribes dissolved, and peace with them all a probable event.

Before, therefore, the motion which he had made could be got rid of, it was incumbent on the gentlemen on the other side to shew either that it was improper in any case whatever to pass a vote of thanks, or that this was not a case entitled to them; to do the first they must establish, in the face of precedents innumerable, a doctrine destructive of one of the most amiable privileges of the house; to do the last they must express a sentiment which would, he was persuaded, be repugnant to the sentiments of all their constituents, for throughout the United States there was but one opinion on this subject, and that was in unison with the motion.—Having made the motion after due deliberation, he certainly should not withdraw it, but would submit it to the good sense of the house.

Mr. Coit moved the previous question. He thought the practice of dangerous consequence. It might produce much uncomfortable proceeding in that house. He was seconded by a number of members.

Mr. Parker felt the highest esteem for the services of the western army. He was intimate both with Gen. Wayne and Gen. Scott; but he disapproved of the practice upon principle. It was wrong in Mr. Murray to quote the proceedings in the Legislature of Virginia, where the Governor was in authority, a mere cypher, because the two cases did not apply. The federal government was on a quite different footing, a mixture of monarchy, of aristocracy, and of democracy. The President represented the monarchical part. It was his business to give thanks, if requisite. If he himself was an officer in that army, Mr. Parker said that he should be satisfied by the first thanks, those in the answer to the President. He would be hurt by the second as *unconstitutional*. What if, in the mean time, General Wayne and his army may have committed some error, that requires an enquiry, and the House are to go into it, with this vote of thanks *flaring them in their face!* It had been said by Mr. Smith, that if we had been sitting in September, when this news arrived, a vote of thanks would have been passed immediately and unanimously. "I believe no such thing," said Mr. Parker. "We should have recommended such a step to the President."

Mr. Giles said, that if there ever could have been any doubt as to the impropriety of the resolution, that was now removed. (Alluding to the speech of Mr. Parker,) he thought that the gentleman (Mr. Coit) who moved the previous question, had acted from the best motives. Two gentlemen (We believe Mr. Giles referred to Mr. Sedgwick and Mr. Ames) had recommended an appeal to feeling system. We are sent here to reason. A gentleman (Mr. Sedgwick) says that he has feelings which he cannot express. Let him strive to express them. It is not expected that a member is to express *all* that he may feel on every subject.

(To be continued.)

Foreign Intelligence.

NATIONAL CONVENTION.

October 6.

NEWS FROM THE ARMIES.

Carnot in the name of the Committee of Public Safety made the following report:

CITIZENS, A splendid victory has just now covered the army of the Sambre and the Meuse with glory. The enemy, entrenched on the banks of the Roer, and protected by the fortresses of Juliers, was totally defeated; and the fortresses of Juliers is taken.

This event is the most important of all those which have happened during the course of this campaign, without even excepting the battle of Fleurus.

Maastricht has now lost all hopes of being relieved: a stand for our armies near the banks of the Rhine is assured; the enemy is exiled to the other side of that river; the road to Holland is opened; our winter quarters are protected; and we are masters of all the resources, which the provinces of Limburg, Cologne, Treves, Luxemburg and Juliers offer.

The enterprise was also the most difficult ever undertaken; the enemy had rallied all their forces; their army amounted to 80,000 men; all the advantages of art and nature, were on their side; but we had the advantage of courage, confidence and remembrance of our glorious exploits: And what are the obstacles of nature and art, in comparison to the genius of Liberty and the love of our country!

Citizens, all our exterior enemies are humbled, and flying; the armies were consequently the first, in accomplishing their task; it belongs now to us, to ac-

complish ours; for our warriors have imposed on us the duty, to crush the internal enemies of the Republic.

Citizens, triumphant armies obey your voice; and should a few intriguers be suffered to dictate laws in the hall of the Convention? No! it is time that the national representation should seize with its gigantic arms all the factions; that it should reduce the factions to their nullity, by dashing them against each other; it is time at last to announce, that the Convention will be the depositary of the rights of the people, and annihilate those who shall dare to put their hypocritical or furious hands on the Ark of the Revolution.

The official Letters:

Head-Quarters, Juliers, Oct. 31.

Gillet Representative of the People with the army of the Sambre and the Meuse to the Committee of Public Safety.

Dear Colleagues,

I delayed, to this moment, sending you an account of the latter successes of the army of the Sambre and Meuse, because I wished to announce to you at the same time a victory, the capture of a fortified town, of a citadel, of 60 pieces of artillery, of a great quantity of powder and ammunition.

You saw, by my last dispatches that the Austrian army defeated on the 18th and 20th Sept. in detail, at Sprimont and Clermont, had rallied in mass on the river Roer, and consisted of between 60 and 80 thousand men. On the 22d September we took Aix-la-Chapelle, and our army encamped in the plain of Aldenhoven; its left wing supported on the Worm, and the right wing extended to Schwiller, on the Deute.

The design of the enemy was to defend the passage over the Roer, and to effect a communication with Maastricht a strong detachment of the Austrian army was, to that effect, posted on the left bank of the Roer, and occupied the famous position behind Aldenhoven and before Juliers, which, already strong by nature, was besides fortified with a chain of redoubts, and almost impregnable in all its points.

We were determined to pursue our successes, and Jourdan resolved to force the last entrenchments of the enemy. To ensure success, it was necessary to have recourse to one of those skilful and bold manoeuvres, which, if executed by experienced officers and intrepid soldiers render always the greatest enterprises possible; for, the Roer, though fordable in many places, was swollen by the rain, which fell in ten days. Besides all the fords were rendered impracticable and thick set with chevaux de frize; the bridges were broken down and the heights extending on the right bank of the Roer, from its spring to Roermonde, were covered with fortified lines and redoubts, defended by a formidable artillery.

Jourdan divided the army in four corps; he gave the command of the right wing to general Scherer; the direction of the left wing to general Klieber; general Le Fevre was ordered to put himself at the head of the advanced guard, and Jourdan reserved for himself the centre which formed the main force of the army. The generals, Hatry, Morlon, Championnet and Dubois were under his orders. General Scherer was ordered to force the passage of Dueren; Klieber to direct the march of his column towards Neisberg, and the advanced guard to attack Linnich, while the main force should be occupied in sweeping away the camp before Juliers.

Yesterday at 5 o'clock all the columns began their march: the different corps attacked with equal courage; the camp of Juliers was forced and all the redoubts were taken with an intrepidity without example and in less than two hours.

The cavalry of the enemy appeared, to cover their retreat; but they were charged, routed, and pursued to the glaciis of Juliers, and owed, as well as the rest of the Austrian army, their safety to the artillery of the fortresses, which prevented us from exterminating them at once. The 8th and 14th regiments of dragoons distinguished themselves particularly in this engagement.

The other columns were equally successful; but they met with difficulties of another kind. When the advanced guard appeared before Linnich, the enemy had destroyed the bridge and set fire to the town; all the passages being rendered impracticable, our republicans were obliged to brave a terrible fire of small arms and artillery, while they were occupied in re-establishing the bridges. Our artillery began now to thunder and in this, as well as in every former occasion proved its superiority over that of the enemy, who were forced to abandon their redoubts, and to retreat.

The passage over the river could however not be entirely effected, because it was found impossible to build the bridges before night. All was prepared to cross the Roer this morning, when after the fall of a thick fog we

discovered on the other bank of the river the enemy in full flight.

Several redoubts were raised during the night before Juliers, we established immediately a battery of howitzers, which begun to bombard the fortresses with considerable effect, when the white flag was hung out in the citadel. A deputation of the magistrates offered us the key of the town, which had been evacuated during the night, and the fortresses surrendered at discretion.

The 2d of October will be a memorable day for the armies of the Republic; an army of between 60 and 80 thousand men defeated notwithstanding the most formidable position; a place, stronger than Landrecies, evacuated, tho' it was besides defended by a good citadel, and fosses, filled with water; a fortress conquered, without striking a blow, with all its artillery, a well provided arsenal and more than 500 quintals of powder: these dear colleagues, are the fruits of that splendid victory.

The loss of the enemy is immense. The fields on the left bank at the Roer to the fortified lines are covered with dead bodies: this and every circumstance, we observed this morning give striking proofs of the precipitate retreat of the Austrians.

Every object on the road to Cologne, bears the mark of the most complete defeat. Several columns of cavalry, flying artillery, and grenadiers are in pursuit of the enemy; and in this very moment I receive intelligence, that general Dubois at the head of 6 regiments of cavalry, has reached the baggage of the enemy on the road to Cologne, and made about 200 prisoners.

I cannot mention all the traits of heroism and courage displayed during the battle; else I would be obliged to write down the names of all the corps, of all the generals, of every officer and soldier; for all have fought like heroes.

I shall only cite two particularly remarkable actions. The first happened in the corps commanded by general Klieber. Those brave warriors, impatient to delay the attack, for the want of a bridge, plunged into the water, crossed the river, attacked the retrenchments of the enemy, and took them with the bayonet and sword in hand. The second action covers two squadrons of chasseurs commanded by general Hautpont with glory; they met with four squadrons of Austrian hussars, charged them, without considering their number, and drove them into the river. Almost all the hussars were taken, cut to pieces, or drowned.

Health and Fraternity.

Health Gillet.

Jourdan commander in chief of the army of Sambre and Meuse to the Citizens representatives composing the committee of public safety.

Head-quarters, Juliers October 3.

The army marched yesterday to the banks of the Roer, in order to attack the enemy. The right wing was directed against Dueren, the centre against Juliers, one division against Linnich, and the left wing against Huifberg and Rendarat.

All the troops, the enemy had posted on the left bank of the river were soon routed by a vigorous attack of the Republicans.

The right and left wing attacked in those points where the enemy wanted to effect a passage over the river, and notwithstanding the redoubts and enormous entrenchments all the posts were forced; the republicans, braving the most heavy fire of the enemy, built up new bridges; some who were more impatient swam over the river.

The centre charged the Austrian cavalry, till within musquet shot of the fort of Juliers, the fire of which alone could have driven them from being cut to pieces. Night terminated the battle and we were prepared this morning to make use of our newly constructed bridges for recommencing the conflict; but the enemy did not think it advisable, to wait for us; they set off at midnight; a thick fog concealed their retreat till 8 o'clock.

We took advantage of the darkness of the night & established a battery of howitzers before Juliers; as soon as the fog permitted us to discover the place, we threw some shells in the fortresses. The magistrates came immediately to deliver the keys and announced us the evacuation of that place; which we found in the best condition; we found 60 pieces of cannon, a well provided arsenal, and different other articles: the specification of which I have not received yet.

The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded amounts to about 4 or five thousand men; between 7 and 8 hundred prisoners; a great many horses, and deserters. Our cavalry pursues the enemy.—In the evening I shall receive news of their exploits I do not doubt but the representative of the people, Gillet, will give you a detailed account concerning the behaviour of the troops.

This very moment I am informed, that 500 quintals of powder were found at Juliers.

Health and Fraternity. Signed JOURDAN.