

REVIEW of the SESSION of CONGRESS

THE proceedings of the Session of Congress which will this day terminate, are too interesting to our fellow-citizens to be passed over in silence. We have the more pleasure in briefly reviewing them, as we find that the good which has been done this Session is chiefly owing to those same patriots who prevented the mischief which was near being done at the last. The most prominent measures of the present Session, are an authority to the President to station troops at Pittsburgh, the naturalization bill, the military establishment, the act for calling forth the militia to suppress insurrections and repel invasions, a provisional relief for the good citizens whose property was destroyed in the Western country by the insurgents, some further regulations for the securing of peace on the frontiers by restraining the lawless inhabitants of those regions, a provision to facilitate a loan for the Algerine negotiations, and the act for the further support of public credit and the redemption of the public debt. The situation of the Western country for evidently called for the first measure that it was agreed to without opposition in both houses.

The naturalization bill was introduced by a member whose chief object appeared to be the exclusion of foreigners from the commercial advantages enjoyed by American citizens, but a more enlarged and beneficial operation was intended to be given to the hands of representatives, where it was so modified as to exclude foreigners from a participation of political rights, until a long term of probation and the proof of good moral character and principles should entitle them thereto.

The military establishment has been rendered more adequate to the effectual defence of the frontiers by increasing the pay and bounty. The same spirit which for several years has stimulated to an attempt to substitute militia altogether to regulars for the frontier operations, induced an attempt at this Session to reduce the Western army; but the recent example of its success, its decided superiority over militia in many respects, and particularly in the article of expense, made a defeat of the attempt almost a matter of course. The advantages derived from that army have been confirmed by the application for peace by the Indian tribes who were the most hostile before they were chastised by it; the impolicy of withdrawing our forces at the moment of victory, would have been only equalled by the ridiculous affectation of those who pretend that a small army is inconsistent with our liberties.

The act providing for calling forth the militia to suppress insurrections, is varied from the former law, by leaving it to the discretion and responsibility of the executive to judge of the exigency, instead of requiring, as in the former act, a certificate of a judge. The remedy will thus be not only more prompt but less liable to be obstructed by the reluctance or hesitation of a Judge to give the necessary certificate.

The act for the relief of the Western citizens whose property was destroyed by the insurgents, was as just as it was political, and will be attended with obviously good effects. The sufferers are however considered as bound to prosecute the offenders and recover what they can, which they are to account for; the provision made for them by Congress being only to afford them a temporary aid, and to indemnify them against any future loss, in the event of their failing to recover, of which however there is little prospect, the offenders being said to be competent.

To secure peace on the frontiers, a restraint of the whites is found indispensable; the sales of lands by the State of Georgia will increase the necessity of vigorous restraints, or war with the most formidable tribes will be unavoidable. This is among the most difficult items of legislation, a timid policy constantly withholding those regulations which can alone curb the licentious.

There are few objects more desirable than the liberation of our fellow-citizens now in captivity at Algiers, and the safety of those who may navigate hereafter in the vicinity of the Mediterranean. To obtain both these objects Congress have at the present Session, with alacrity, concurred in such measures as have been recommended by the executive, to give full effect to his operations, and a flattering hope is entertained that they will be crowned with success.

Among the last in order, tho' among the first in importance, is the act for the redemption of the public debt. This measure was introduced at an early period of the Session by Mr. Smith of South Carolina, on whose motion it

was resolved by the house, that further provision ought to be made for the reduction of the debt.

Tho' the report of the committee, appointed to prepare a plan, was made early in the Session, it encountered so much opposition, and from those who had always been the most clamorous for a reduction of the debt, that it was near the close of the Session before the report was agreed to; and had it not been for the persevering efforts and repeated exertions of that member, and a few others, this business, interesting as it is to the nation, would have been for the present, defeated. While the continuation of the necessary revenues for this purpose was under discussion, the then Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Hamilton, sent in a very able report, which, in addition to a variety of valuable matter, evinced the necessity of these revenues, without however diminishing the opposition to them. This report recommended to Congress several important points, some of which were incorporated in the act for the reduction of the debt. By that act, a Sinking Fund is constituted, composed of the surplusses of revenue—of the bank dividends, and of the proceeds of the Western lands, when sold. This fund will not only amply suffice to pay off so much of the six per cent. and deferred debt as the government has the right to redeem, but will leave an overplus for purchases of stock in the market. To prevent the misapplication, or diversion of this fund, from its intended use, the monies belonging to it are committed to the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, as property, in trust, to be applied to the discharge and redemption of the debt; and the faith of the government is solemnly pledged, that they shall be invariably applied to that purpose, and no other. Tho' this provision was the best in the act, and the key-stone of the system, it was opposed with a warmth which could only have been expected from those who wished the debt never to be discharged; and which astonished, by the quarter from which it came. The invariable experience of those countries which are groaning under enormous debts, ought to have admonished every reasonable mind, that to leave the monies of a Sinking Fund liable to be diverted, on every occasional exigency, from the purposes of its institution, would be to defeat every serious effort to get out of debt. The reasonableness of the thing, and the exertions of the friends of the system, prevailed over an opposition, founded on a pretended zeal for the liberty of the House of Representatives, to do and undo at its pleasure. Fortunately a system is now established which does no less honor to the wisdom and patriotism of its promoters, than it reflects lustre on the government of the United States. To establish a Sinking Fund, inviolable and unalienable, which is to be steadily applied to the reduction of the national debt, until the whole of it be discharged; and which fund is competent to the discharge of the whole debt, within a short period of years, is a great and glorious measure, the example of which is first given by the United States to the nations of Europe.

The sale of the Western Lands will, it is hoped, hereafter considerably increase the strength of the Sinking Fund. A bill for opening land offices in the territories North and South of the Ohio, was reported to the House, but the delay produced by the opposition, which has been mentioned, occasioned a postponement of it to the next Session. But this fund will not yield much, if the speculations in the territory sold by Georgia should draw adventurers to that quarter: It is imagined, however, and not without reason, that the energetic measures, contemplated by the government of the United States, will altogether disappoint the projects of the purchasers of that territory.

A new militia system was also bro't forward; but a difference of sentiment on a fundamental principle, and the lateness of the Session, induced a postponement to the next Congress: In the mean time, a thousand copies of the bill are printed, in order to be distributed throughout the States, and thereby to invite information, and obtain the sentiments of the people, on a subject as difficult as it is interesting.

Several other matters engaged the attention of Congress, during the Session: Some acts have passed for ameliorating the revenues of the United States; and affording additional benefits to commerce and navigation; thus a Session has closed, with as much harmony as has been witnessed since the establishment of the government, which may truly be said to have been as beneficial to the nation as any former Session. March 3.

SIR,
YOUR ingenious and modest correspondent, "A Friend to the Arts," has professed me entirely, to his side of the question. Who would think of patronizing a parcel of demi-savage artists of America, when men "of character, and known abilities," from Great-Britain, condescend to come among us? Such a disinterested conduct, independent of every other consideration, entitles the gentlemen who compose the Anglo-Columbianum, to every encouragement and liberality from the thinking part of our citizens. When gentlemen of their known "talents, integrity, and genius," forsake their own country, where honors and rewards were showered down upon them, to contribute their stock to the advancement and improvement of our country, who is there among us, that would withhold their purse, from such disinterested adventurers? What a character should we not acquire abroad, did we neglect to patronize gentlemen who are so "ambitious to render us service by their abilities!" Think of the consequences should they "return home with disgust and indignation!"—All Europe would resound with our brutality, inhospitality, and ingratitude; and they would consider us as little better than Anthropophagi, below the level of "savages, or wild beasts." Sir, I shudder at the consequences that would result to the United States, should the gentlemen who compose the Anglo-Columbianum abandon their pursuits, and denounce us in Great-Britain! Their talents, their consequence, their genius, and their influence, would put a stop to every emigration to this country, and in future we should not have even a scavenger, who would trust himself in our barbarous land—Heaven! the very idea "freezes my young blood!"

Some rude and untaught creatures among us, have presumed to censure the gentlemen, who are at work in behalf of our country, for such profuse commendations of their own "genius, talents, and integrity;" but for my own part, I think it very proper; for as they are strangers among us, if they did not praise themselves, their merits might remain unknown, and they might "blush unseen, and waste their sweeten in the distant air."

Sir, I am of opinion that Mr. Peale's conduct is highly exceptionable, more especially as he is Treasurer of the Society for the promotion of emigration. For I aver, that the man who will not encourage foreigners, at the expense of his own countrymen, nay at his own expense, is an enemy to his country, and an enemy to the promotion of emigration—Let Mr. Peale, in future, beware of such inconsistency!

The society who hold their meetings at the City-Hall, at the City-Hall I say, designated by the name of Columbianum, are right worthy gentlemen, and deserving of encouragement; for every man of taste and sentiment should plant and cultivate an exotic in preference to the shrubs of his native soil. Did I need an accoucheur, I certainly would prefer one from the Columbianum; for the Dr. Slops of this country are not worth a bawbee!!!

BRITANNICUS.
March 3d, 1795.

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Saturday, 28th February.

Mr. New from the committee of enrolments, reported the following bills.

An act relative to the passing of coasting vessels between Long Island and Rhode Island.

An act to continue in force for a limited time the acts therein mentioned.

An act relative to cessions of jurisdiction in places where light houses, beacons, buoys and public piers have been, or may hereafter be erected and fixed.

An act for the relief of William Seymour.

Dr. Beatty, at several times, both this day, and yesterday, moved that the bill emendatory of the "act laying duties upon carriages for the conveyance of persons," reported by him a few days since, should be taken up. The pressure of other more important business before the House prevented his motion from succeeding, so that this bill may be expected to stand over in its present shape till the next session.

It was moved that the House should resolve itself into a committee on the bill for establishing trading houses for the purpose of supplying the Indian nations, within the territory of the Uni-

ted States. This was done accordingly, by Mr. Sherbourne in the chair.

Mr. Giles then moved to strike out the first section.

Mr. Goodhue wished to move that the committee should rise, to which Mr. Giles agreed. Mr. Goodhue then said, that his reason for this motion was the inattention of members to the business before them. To attempt going thro' the bill at present was a perfect farce. He was satisfied that the bill would never go through this session. He did not for his own part yet know whether it was proper or not.

Mr. Parker rose next. It was with difficulty that either this gentleman or Mr. Goodhue could be heard, which is here mentioned as an apology, if any part of their meaning has been mistaken. Mr. Parker said that the bill had been long enough before the House for the gentleman from Massachusetts to have made himself acquainted with its contents, and its merits. He vindicated the principle of the bill, as tending to conciliate the affections of a distressed and unhappy people, and as it might likewise prevent the expenses of a war, with them. France, Britain and Spain, had adopted this policy, and found the good effects of it. He considered the bill as of the utmost consequence, and thinking so, he should exert his utmost influence to get it pass. The expense proposed was not great, as the affair was only experimental.

Mr. Montgomery was of the same opinion with the gentleman who spoke last. He thought that the Indians had common sense enough not to quit allies who supplied them with articles which they wanted, till we also made some effectual establishment of that kind. The member went on the same ground with the gentleman who spoke last.

Mr. Boudinot thought that the reason given by Mr. Goodhue for moving that the committee should rise, viz. that gentlemen would not attend to their duty, was the very worst imaginable. What did the House meet for at all? It was the duty of the chair to compel them to mind their business. Mr. Boudinot, who was himself but very indistinctly heard, then referred to something which had been said by Mr. Swift who had been upon his legs just before Mr. Boudinot, and of whose remarks we had not been able to hear one sentence distinctly. Mr. Boudinot, in reply to this gentleman, said, that he would not wish to press the bill this session, if members did not think it proper. He was willing, if agreeable to the President, for one year to the President. But there never would nor could be a complete peace till something of this kind was done. The President himself has told us as much.

Mr. Giles said, that the thing could not be got through this session. He was willing to take the question either in the first way that he had moved it, or in the other. This was a most improper time of the session to bring it in.

Mr. Murray hoped that the committee would seriously attend to the first clause in the bill, and would not rise. He felt the shortness of the time, but he was willing to devote to-morrow (Sunday) to this subject, and he trusted, the importance of it would give the employment a solemnity not inconsistent with the day. Without a bill to establish a well guarded intercourse with the Indians, the frontier policy will be unsystematic and despicable. To complete the system, it appeared to him, that three great objects are to be embraced. First, force, to protect the frontier from Indian invasion—for this the military establishment is made. Second, a regulation by law, that shall restrain the frontier people from predatory invasion into the Indian country, carrying law and settlement hand in hand. Third, the establishment of trading houses under the influence of the two first parts of the system, for the purpose of conciliating the Indians, by supplying their wants, and detaching their habits of trade and their affections from a foreign nation. With these three points embraced in one system, he had no doubt but their co-operation would produce the great object, peace on the frontier. Without the last, the other parts of the system would be totally inefficient.

Mr. Hillhouse said, that the house ought to begin at the right end of the subject, by reversing the vote which the committee passed yesterday, authorizing the frontier people to pass the line in pursuit of the Indians, as often as they pleased. If this was allowed, it would be impossible ever to keep the peace.

On a division shall the committee now rise.

Ayes 35.
Noes 31.

The question was then put by the

Speaker, shall the committee have leave to sit again—

Ayes 34.
Noes 33.

But it was presently remarked, that some gentlemen had risen both at the ayes and noes. Others had been without the bar. The numbers were therefore taken over again and stood thus.

Ayes 36.
Noes 41.

The bill is therefore thrown out.

The new bill, as to the mode of collecting the duties on Taff and sugar, was read a third time, the blanks filled up, and the bill passed.

Mr. Heister called for the second reading of the report of the select committee, on the memorial from the sugar refiners. The committee on this subject were, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Findley, and Mr. Heister. The House did not take up this memorial, but proceeded to the unfinished business before them.

This was the resolution mentioned in our account of the debate of yesterday, with Mr. Venable's amendment. When the question was going to be taken on it, Mr. Venable rose, and pointed out the difference of opinion between two gentlemen, who were both opposed to his amendment. One of them, Mr. Sedgwick, had maintained, that when individual Indians, unauthorized by the rest of their tribe, crossed the line, and committed depredations, a settler was by the law of nations, authorized to pursue them across the line, and retaliate, and that this was implied in the bill. Mr. Hillhouse had materially differed from him, and agreed with Mr. Venable, in supposing that the person so pursuing across the line, was punishable by the resolution, as it stood, without the amendment. He then reminded the House, that this frontier line was perhaps fifteen hundred miles long. The Indians may come over at any part of it, while the citizens of the United States are not to be allowed to cross it one mile, in pursuit; even a man in pursuit of savages, who may have carried off his wife, and children may be stopped. The amendment he regarded as essential. Military officers may judge upon the spot, whether such persons whom they meet beyond the line, in pursuit of Indians, are within the scope of the act or not.

Mr. Ames denied that the resolution as it first stood, took away the right of a man to pursue the Indians, in order to recover his wife and children. But the amendment of Mr. Venable went to legalize all those acts of violence and depredations for a century past, have deluged the frontier in blood.

Mr. Lyman vindicated the inhabitants of the frontier. If the Indians are so unfortunate as to be the dupes of other nations, (viz. the Spaniards and British,) that is not our fault. The frontier people, from time to time have done every thing in their power to keep them in peace.

Mr. Hillhouse opposed the amendment.

Mr. McDowell said, that weekly and daily murders were committed by the Creeks, in the district of Mero, and on the south-western territory. Do the United States avenge these murders? No. Do they demand back the property carried off? No. Instead of any satisfaction to the people, their characters are abused on this floor. The frontier people know that their happiness consists in peace, and therefore cultivate it as much as they can. He took a general view of the subject, and explained the insignificance of the polls at present held by the troops of the United States, for any purpose of protection. He noticed the inveterate hatred of the Indians against the whites, and their innate thirst of blood.

Mr. Moore went on the same grounds.

Mr. Giles did not like the harsh stile assumed by some gentlemen in speaking of the frontier settlers. An hundred years hence these people would preponderate over this part of the continent. He represented an Atlantic part of the Union, he would carefully avoid any thing that might offend the Western people. The first settlers in this country were, when they first landed, frontier settlers. For his own part he believed, that the war between the whites and the Indians would be eternal. He said that from some intelligence received this day, there was reason to believe that a war with the Creeks might soon be expected.

Mr. Wadsworth. "Gentlemen have a great disposition to husband our little time, and I need not mention their manner of doing it." He said that he was willing to grant protection to the frontiers, but not to give leave, as by the amendment proposed, for an eternal war. He thought it calculated to drive the gentlemen on each side of this question, into such opposite extremes, that they would never meet a-