

L A W S
OF THE
UNITED STATES.

An ACT to amend the act entitled "An act to establish the Post-Office and Post-Roads within the United States."

Sec. 1. BE it enacted by the Senate of House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following be, and are hereby established as Post-Roads, namely:— From Pittstown in the district of Maine; to Wilcasser; and from Hallowell in the said district, to Norridgewort; From Dover in New-Hampshire thro' Berwick, to Waterborough Courthouse, and from thence to Kennebunk: From Portsmouth through Dover, Rochester, & Moultonborough, to Plymouth; and from Plymouth to Portsmouth, by New Hampton, Meredith, Gilmantown, Nottingham and Durham; the post to go and return on the said route alternately; from Fishkill by Newburgh and New Windsor to Goshen: From Coopers Town by Butternut creek and Oxford Academy to Union Town:— From Piper's, on the post-road from Philadelphia to Bethlehem, by Alexandria to Pittston in New-Jersey: From Brownville in Pennsylvania, to the town of Washington: From Reading, by Sunbury, and the town of Northumberland, to Lewisburg, commonly called Der'fstown, on the Susquehanna; From Bethlehem to Wilksburgh in the county of Luzerne: From York-Town, through Abbotts' town & Gettysburgh, to Hagerstown in Maryland; and from Hagerstown, through Williamsport, to Martinsburg in Virginia: From Annapolis, by Lower Marlborough, to Calvert Courthouse, and from thence to Saint Leonard's creek: From Bladenburgh in Maryland through Upper Marlboro' to Nottingham, and from thence to the town of Benedict: From Belle-Air, in Harford county, Maryland, to the Black-horse on the York and Baltimore road: From Gloucester Courthouse, in Virginia, to York-town: From Powhatan Courthouse, to Carter's Ville: From Charlottesville, by Warren, Warminster, Newmarket, Amherst Courthouse, Cabellsburgh and Madison, to Lynchburgh: From Winchester, through Romney, to Moorfields: From Charlotte in North-Carolina, by Lancaster Courthouse, to Cambridge in South-Carolina, and from Charlotte to Lincoln: From Beards-town, in Kentucky, to Nashville in the territory South of the river Ohio.

Sec. 2. And be it further enacted, That instead of the road from Fayetteville, by Lumberton to Cheraw Courthouse, the route of the post shall be on the most direct road from Fayetteville to Cheraw Courthouse; and that the Postmaster General shall have authority to discontinue the post road, from Lumberton to Cheraw Courthouse, and from Hager's town to Sharpsburg in Maryland. That, if in the opinion of the Postmaster General, an alteration in the post road from Cumberland in Maryland, to Morgantown in Virginia, and from thence, by Union Town in Pennsylvania, to Brownville on the Monongahela, could be made more conducive to the public interest, than the present route, yet so as to afford the same accommodation to the said places, he shall be authorized, with the consent of the present contractor for carrying the mail, to make such alteration.

Approved, February the twenty fifth, 1795.

For the Gazette of the United States.

M. FENNO,

THERE is no general law that does not interfere with the wishes, pursuits, interest, or disposition, of particular persons or denominations; this is incident to the condition of human nature—hence it results, that if the feelings or arrangements of every class of citizens are to be consulted and accommodated by the legislative body, in enacting laws, we must abandon the hope of continuing civil society. It must be conceded, that every community possesses in itself the power of providing for, and perpetuating its own existence—and this necessarily implies a right to adopt and pursue every measure, which in its nature is best calculated to contribute to that object.

There are certain principles inseparably connected with humanity, which require scarcely the smallest association of ideas to appreciate them; hence men in a savage state, annex the idea of property to their acquisitions, and are tenacious of life and natural liberty; but, of civilized existence, they have very confused if any conceptions.

In a state of society, founded on the principles of civil freedom, what a different state of things is presented! All is the result of comparison, association and combination.

Here, human nature, by the aid of reflection, is advanced, even under the rudest forms of civil government, one grade higher in the scale of being—Knowledge lays the foundation of liberty—and by its genial influence alone, can it be preserved. Experience has shown in all ages, that the will of the nation is alone competent to preserving and perpetuating that knowledge. The government must say that the people shall be instructed; and remissness or neglect on their part, in this momentous concern, is to abandon the most essential interests of their constituents. There is no part of the Union in which a variety of sects and denominations do not exist; but in some of the states we behold the happiest effects resulting from a general provision by law, for the education of all classes of the people.— In this state, particular descriptions provide for the instruction of their children, agreeable to their own profession: It cannot be supposed, that in this enlightened age, any restrictions will ever be conceived of, much less enacted, that shall deprive them of the right they now exercise; but can it be denied that the aggregate of those poor of every denomination, whose children get no education whatever, does not amount to such a number, as to demand legislative interference in their favour? No human being ought to grow up in ignorance—No wise community will abandon any proportion of its members to such a fate—policy, economy and justice, forbid it: But how is the expense to be defrayed? I answer, by those who receive the benefit—THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE. Encrease knowledge, and you diminish crimes; diminish crimes, and public expenses are lessened a thousand fold. Shall the bachelor, who has no children, be taxed to support public schools? Why not—should not every one who enjoys the benefits of a well ordered society contribute his proportion to the expense incurred to obtain them?—But must particular societies be doubly taxed? For superior advantages, real or imaginary men will generally pay cheerfully—The republic must be taken care of, and when it is proposed to do this in the cheapest manner, no just cause of complaint can exist. The Quakers, the Germans, the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, &c. if they see proper, may have their particular seminaries—and God forbid that the Legislature should ever say nay: But still it will not be denied, that government have a duty to perform, unless it can be made to appear, that the means of common learning, (that learning absolutely necessary to constitute a free member of a free community) are accessible to the children of the poorest man among us.

Public Schools, supported by a general tax, should be founded on general principles. All denominations, experience shews, may be instructed together—no sect should have a preference, nor so much as ever named—Knowledge and morals are of no party, and may be inculcated into the minds of children of every persuasion, without tincturing or biasing their religious propensities. Let the advantages resulting from educating the poor, be counterbalanced with the expenses of ignorance, and see if the plausible objections to Public Schools of a writer in your yesterday's paper who signs "A Parent," do not kick the beam.

March 26.

SIXTH LETTER ON PARTIES.

Addressed to the People of the State of New-York.

IN my fifth letter, I undertook to prove, that the spirit of party was repugnant to the operation of law, and to the spirit of republican government. I trust there are few, in this enlightened country, who are disposed to undervalue the republican system. Many anxious doubts and apprehensions have indeed been entertained with respect to its practicability for any extensive period:—Such doubts have principally arisen from a view of the fatality which seems to have attended the republics of ancient times:—But if we trace their history, with but a cursory eye, we shall discover that party spirit, in one shape or another has been the most general and most operative cause of their destruction.

If it were necessary to the plan of this inquiry, it might be remarked, with little danger of error, that many of the defects in the organization of all the ancient republics, which were naturally adapted to promote party-spirit, are in a great degree remedied in that of the United States, by the multiplied improvements in theory, by checking and softening the passions of men, and by extending and establishing the dominion

of the laws.—Let us candidly conclude that party-spirit does not grow out of the original and native principles of republicanism, but out of errors and corruptions with which those principles have no necessary connection; and let us not too easily be led away, by imposing examples, to depreciate and despise principles, which have never yet been fairly tried.—Will any still insist that party-spirit is the natural offspring of republicanism? We contend that it is its natural enemy: It is a contrary power forever obstructing all its vital operations: Too long have the principles of liberty been disgraced by being associated with those of faction: The association is as imaginary as it is monstrous. We think we stand on strong ground while we shew you how repugnant and how hostile the properties of party-spirit are to those of pure republicanism: And if upon examination it is found that party spirit is not an innate, primary quality, but a foreign, adventitious and monstrous corruption; surely all true republicans and all found patriots will unite, not only to condemn but to banish it.—Few indeed are so hardy as publicly to advocate the party system; but many suppose we must submit to it as a necessary evil.—In this view the policy of many able men has been, not to attempt the abolition of parties in general; but to maintain the interests of their own, as being in their estimation the just and catholic one, and as pursuing the true interests of the state:—Such men, in their moments of calm reflection, will profess to abhor the principles of the factious system, and to deplore its fatal effects; but immediately they will go and act as if they were its greatest friends:—Such are either mere pretenders or they are subject to that common prejudice, which attaches all the opinions and sentiments of men to the side on which they act; and leads them to pronounce against the views and policy of their opponents the most unqualified condemnation.

You have seen in my last letter how contrary the operation of party-spirit is to the operation of law, and in that view, how inconsistent with the spirit of republicanism. Let us proceed in the detail we proposed.

One of the primary and most important principles of a republican government is—that the public good or general interest of the community supercedes all private or personal interests, and is the grand object to which the public counsels and the regard of individuals are invariably directed. On this principle all public depositaries of power must represent the people. Many governments, both ancient and modern, which are erroneously denominated republics, are defective in this principle: It is a glory (perhaps reserved for the American Constitution to bring it completely into operation. This constitution, although complex in its form, & unequal in the apportionment of its official powers, is undoubtedly, upon true popular principles, the purest in the world. Subordination is an artificial thing: It is a matter of mere practical convenience essentially necessary to facilitate the discharge of the public functions: It does not affect the rights of the people; in the view of which all public functionaries, however various their station in the government, stand upon one common level. There is neither prerogative nor privilege known in the system; nor is there a particle of the spirit of monarchy or aristocracy in the composition: In it all power is representative, all office an occasional trust, all authority responsible: There is no man, no class, no order, no portion of the community, whose distinct interests it is the standing policy of the laws to protect and provide for. I owe this digressive eulogium to the constitution of my country; than which I know nothing in the world of political science, more worthy of our admiration or affections.

But to return—In a season of moderation and peace, the principle I have above mentioned will be operative; and the sacrifice of private interest to the public good will be more easy and natural: For in a regular government the ordinary restraints of the laws will be sufficient to check the ambition of any individual who is not powerfully supported; and at a period when the public mind is in a state of tranquility, the ambitious man can hardly reckon upon being powerfully supported; because at such a period, the affections of the people are more diffused and less violent; because they are naturally less indisposed to allow any pretensions, but such as the laws authorize, or a long course of meritorious services have established; and lastly because they have cooler judgments to discern, and more independent spirit to pursue, the public interest, without a demagogue or a dictator: It follows, that in such a state, what is called influence, that is, a secret power which individuals have over the minds of men contrary to the operation of law, will more rarely prevail: whereas in times of internal dissension, the people are nothing without a leader: Their plain sense, and well meaning integrity are found inadequate to the difficult energy: a different sort of talents become necessary—address, cunning, courage and intriguing industry, and a seducing eloquence: They have little other political agency, but what consists in ranging themselves under their feveral commanders, and marching encamping, attacking or retreating in exact obedience to general orders. Under this

discipline, and with the splendid qualities of their leader always in full view, the people learn to love and obey: They form their views of the public good through the medium of corrupt confidence: They mistake the interest of their party for that of their country, and finally the interest of a single individual for their own. Thus without any legal or official authority, one or a few individuals frequently usurp a degree of popular confidence, which is due only to their constitutional rulers: controul the measures of government and obstruct the operation of law without responsibility; and thus the public good is sacrificed to personal ambition. All this is inconsistent with the principles and spirit of republicanism, which allows of no exercise of power but what is delegated by the people or recognized by the constitution.

Another principle of republican government is that the tendency of all public operations is to maintain political equality. Some have presumed to question the soundness of this principle: but they have never dared to do it, without first perverting its sense. Political equality may consist with personal inequality. It is not only compatible with, but essential to a system of equal rights, that a man should enjoy the fruits of his talents and industry. The personal advantages of men, honestly acquired, can never affect the rights of others: But personal advantages when they are applied to dishonest purposes, and when they interfere with the rights of others, as is common in times of party dissension, become inconsistent with the principle of equality. When parties prevail the political liberties of men are surrendered, with incredible facility, to those who least deserve it. By means of superior address, a bad man directs the will, dictates the votes and usurps the rights of thousands. This superiority is gained by art, not by merit: It is won from the passions, or forced from the fears, not conferred by the judgment or the conscience: It is therefore incompatible with political equality.

Again, it is a principle of republicanism that no power is to be exercised, but what is created or recognized by the constitution and laws. This has been hinted at above.

By means of influence, an individual enjoys and exercises a power of amazing extent and energy; a power which often controuls the laws, instead of being controuled by them. No person, who looks into the history of parties, can fail to observe the great authority of certain men, who are not seen in the official catalogue, who have received no trust at the people's hands, and have no responsibility to their country. When parties prevail, an opposition is established, those who represent the people support the laws and are protected by them; those who are in opposition have need of aid and support from other quarters: They naturally have recourse to secret influence and intrigues—they form establishments and institutions not recognized by law, in order to have the force and advantage of joint operation and concert—they form clubs, corresponding committees, and societies of various descriptions—they assume the mock solemnity of legislation, and in their proceedings, affect to imitate the majesty of a Roman senate: the leaders of these associations actually arrive, by dint of skill and perseverance, to a conspicuous elevation, from which they sometimes menace the constituted authorities of their country. All this is substantially a dangerous usurpation; but it is a crisis to which the party system naturally leads.

Further, it is incident to the spirit of a republic to promote and maintain the union of the citizens. The operations of a popular government proceed on the principle of general consent and agreement: The facility and perfection of these operations, therefore, will be in proportion to the perfection of this union. Again, union is also necessary for the safety of the state. Weakness always follows division. A free people rely upon themselves alone for protection. All external and auxiliary power is dangerous and inadmissible. But, without a standing military force, a divided people is totally defenceless, and with it, they are not free. This is their distressing dilemma. Look thro' the volume of history. Ambitious invaders always begin by sowing dissensions and creating parties. When this effected they often find one party ready to deliver up the other.

Having pointed out some of the grounds on which party spirit appears to be incompatible with the spirit and principles of republicanism, I shall refer to future communications the consideration of the other evils both political and moral that are incident to the prevalence of the party system.

CONSTANTIUS.

A Meeting of the Proprietors of WHARVES is requested on Friday Evening next, at 7 o'clock at the City Tavern, in Second Street, to receive the Report of their Committee, it is hoped, that every Proprietor, will attend as the Business is of much importance.

March 26

at

NATIONAL CONVENTION.

Report & Proj ct of a Decree, presented in Nivose, [the latter end of Dec.] by Johannot, in the name of the committees of Public Safety, General Security, Legislation, Commerce and Finances.

On the Means of Restoring the Finances and Public Credit.

Received by the Maria and translated for the Aurora.

Having dispelled the tempests which darkened the political horizon of France, you wish at length to secure to the nation, which has entrusted in your hands her fate and happiness, the reign of order and tranquility; you wish to be made acquainted with our situation, our means and resources, and found a just government on an immovable basis.

In order to execute a project so worthy of you, you will not give your attention to a few insulated parts of the work but take into view the great whole. Particular laws upon the finances, commerce, and agriculture, however wholesome they might in themselves be, would be of little effect, unless tending to a general system of reform and amelioration.

In order that the measures of government may all tend to a great and useful end, it is necessary to embrace at one glance all the objects of legislation, and to examine in succession their dependance on each other and relations.

Almost all the great operations of governments are connected with the subject of finance;—to finance, therefore, our first attention should be turned: Agriculture, commerce and public credit will next deserve consideration.

External relations will then call for our care.

The public opinion, and the necessity and means of fixing it will be objects worthy of attention. These important questions will perhaps lead to the solution of several others. If we find, that our political evils arise principally from the unsteady conduct of government, we shall remedy them by giving it more stability.—We do not come to give rise to fears, nor to discourage your generous intentions: All the errors can be easily remedied, and for this very reason we fear not to unveil them.

Europe combined against us flies before our triumphant armies; we shall not fear to speak before her of the faults we may have committed. The avowal announces the intention to repair them. May it be a prelude of new victories to us, and for our enemies a signal of new defeats.

The first financial question, that which at the present moment occupies the public mind, is that of the exchange in the piece of provisions and merchandize.

The general opinion attributes the disagreeable situation we find ourselves in, the depreciation of our exchange and all the inconveniences that follow it, to the great quantity of assignats in circulation. This opinion is grounded on the principle that, as soon as the circulating medium is increased, the value it represents decreases in proportion, and that the price of provisions rises progressively.

Some imagine that the root of the evil may be come at, by withdrawing a certain quantity of assignats from circulation; leaving the circulating mass equal to the mass in circulation in the old state of things.

This opinion is somewhat founded; it cannot be denied, that the excessive emission of assignats may have a dangerous influence upon the opinion attached to their value, and that a real good would arise from a diminution effected with prudence, by means approved by the strictest principles of equity.

But let us not deceive ourselves, this partial measure can have but a limited effect: It can only palliate the effects of deep wounds which must be probed in order to produce a complete cure.

The assignats, whatever be the amount in circulation rest upon a mortgage, the value of which increases while they are multiplied.

It is to that progressive and correspondent encrease of the republican money and price of national property, that we owe the inexhaustible resources which have astonished Europe, and prepared the triumphs of our 14 armies.

Prudence requires, that we should hazard nothing which can diminish the confidence in our paper, or the value of the property mortgaged for its redemption. The least doubt raised may have consequences the most deplorable. Experience has but too often proved, that even in times of tranquility, any blow at the circulating medium of a country produces commotions the most dangerous.

Those governments that have dared to try such measures, have generally