

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT, FRENCH SPOILIATIONS.

To the Senate of the United States: I return to the Senate, in which it originated, the Bill entitled 'an act to provide for the ascertainment and satisfaction of claims of American citizens for spoiliations committed by the French prior to the 31st of July, 1801,' which was presented to me on the 6th instant, with my objections to its becoming a law.

In attempting to give the bill the careful examination it requires, difficulties presented themselves in the outset, from the remoteness of the period to which the claims belong, the complicated nature of the transaction in which they originated, and the protracted negotiations to which they led between France and the United States. The short time intervening between the passage of the bill by Congress and the approaching close of their session, as well as the pressure of other official duties, have not permitted me to extend my examination of the subject into its minute details. But in the consideration that I have been able to give to it, I find objections of a grave character to its provisions.

For the satisfaction of the claims provided for it, is proposed to appropriate five millions of dollars.—I can perceive no legal or equitable ground upon which this large appropriation can rest. A portion of the claims have been more than half a century before the government, in its Executive or legislative departments, and all of them had their origin in events which occurred prior to 1800. Since 1800, they have been from time to time before Congress. No greater necessity or propriety exists for providing for the claims at this time than has existed for near half a century; during all which period this questionable measure has never until the present time received the favorable consideration of Congress. It is scarcely probable, if the claim had been regarded as obligatory upon the Government, or constituting an equitable demand upon the Treasury that those who were contemporaneous with the events which gave rise to it, should not long since have done justice to the claimants. The Treasury has often been in a condition to enable the Government to do so without inconvenience if the claims had been considered just, Mr. Jefferson who was fully cognizant of the early dissent between the Government of the United States and France out of which the claims arose, in his annual message in 1808 adverted to the large surplus then in the Treasury, and its 'probable accumulation,' and inquired whether it should be 'unproductive in the public vaults,' and yet these claims though then before Congress were not recognized or paid. Since that time the public debt of the revolution and of the war of 1812 has been extinguished, and at several periods since, the Treasury has been in possession of large surpluses over the demands upon it. In 1836, the surplus amounted to many millions of dollars, and for want of proper objects to which to apply it, it was directed by Congress to be deposited with the States.

During this extended course of time, embracing periods eminently favorable for satisfying all just demands upon the government, the claims embraced in this bill met with no favor in Congress, beyond the reports of committees, in one or the other branch. These circumstances alone are calculated to raise strong doubts in respect to these claims, and especially, as all information necessary to a correct judgment concerning them, has been long before the public. These doubts are strengthened in my mind by the examination I have been enabled to give to the transaction in which they originated.

The bill assumes that the United States have become liable in those ancient transactions to make reparation to the claimants for injuries committed by France. Nothing was obtained for claimants by negotiation; and the bill assumes that the government has become many ways responsible for the claims. The limited time allowed me, before

your adjournment, makes it impossible to reiterate the facts and arguments by which, in preceding Congresses, these claims have been successfully resisted. The present is a period particularly unfavorable for the satisfaction of claims of so large an amount, and, to say the least of them, of so doubtful a character. There is no surplus in the Treasury: A public debt of several millions has been created within the last few years. We are engaged in a foreign war, uncertain as to its duration, and involving heavy expenditures; to prosecute which war Congress has, at its present session, authorized a further loan: So that in effect the government, should this bill become a law, would have to borrow money and increase the public debt to pay these claims. It is true, that by the provisions of the bill, payment is directed to be made in land script instead of money, but the effect upon the Treasury will be the same. The public lands constitute one of the sources of public revenue, and if the claims be paid in land script, it will, from the date of the issue, to a great extent, cut off from the Treasury the annual income from the sale of public lands; because the payments for the lands sold by the government may be expected to be made in script until it is all redeemed. If those claims be just they ought to be paid in money and nothing less valuable. The bill provides that they shall be paid in land script, whereby they are in effect to be a mortgage upon the public lands in the new States; a mortgage, too, held in part, if not wholly, by non residents of the States in which the lands lie, who may secure these lands to the amount of several millions of acres, and then demand for them exorbitant prices from the citizens of other States who may desire to purchase them for settlement, or they may keep them out of the market, and thus retard the prosperity and growth of the States in which they are situated. Why this unusual mode of satisfying claimants upon the Treasury has been resorted to, does not appear. It is not consistent with a sound public policy. If it be done in this case it may be done in all others. It will form a precedent for the satisfaction of all other state and questionable claims, and would undoubtedly be resorted to by all claimants, who after successive trials, shall fail to have their claims recognized and paid in money by Congress.

The bill proposes to pay five millions of dollars, to be paid in land script, and provides that no claim or memorial shall be received by the commissioners authorized by the act, unless accompanied by a release or discharge of the U. S. from all other and further compensation that the claimant may be entitled to receive under the provisions of the act. These claims are estimated to amount to a much larger sum than five millions of dollars, and yet the claimant is required to release to the Government all other compensation, and to accept his share of a fund known to be inadequate.

If these claims be well founded, it would be unjust to the claimants to repudiate any portion of them, and the remaining sum could hereafter be resisted. The bill proposes to pay these claims not in the currency known to the Constitution, and not to their full amount.

Passed, as this bill has been, near the close of the session, and when many measures of importance necessarily demand the attention of Congress, and possibly without that full and deliberate consideration which the large sum it appropriates and the existing state of the treasury and of the country demand I deem it my duty to withhold my approval, that it may hereafter undergo the revision of Congress. I have come to this conclusion with regret. Interposing my objections to its becoming a law, I am truly sensible that it should an extreme case which would make it the duty of the Executive to withhold his approval of any bill passed by Congress upon the ground of its expediency alone. Such a case I consider this to be.

JAMES K. POLK.

Washington, Aug. 8, 1846.

Owing to the sickness of the crew of the frigate Raiton, she was not expected to go to sea under a month.

DEMOCRAT. TRUTH WITHOUT FEAR. BLOOMSBURG: SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1846.

DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATE FOR CANAL COMMISSIONER, WILLIAM B. FOSTER, jr.

Removal.

The Office of the 'COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT' has been Removed into the new Brick Building, South side of Main street, a few doors below Market.

AGENCY.

F. B. PALMER, Esq. is authorized to act as Agent for the 'Columbia Democrat,' and to accept all monies for Subscription and Advertising at his Agencies in Philadelphia No. 59 Pine-street. New York " 160 Nassau-street. Boston " 16 State-street. Baltimore S. E. cor. Balt. and Calvert-sts. Merchants, Mechanics and Tradesmen may find it to their advantage to advertise in this paper as it is the only one published at the County Seat and has a greater circulation in the county than any other paper published within its limits.

Democratic County Convention.

The Democratic voters of Columbia County are recommended to meet at the stated places of holding the General Elections in their respective Election Districts, on

Saturday the 5th day of September

next, between the hours of two and six o'clock in the afternoon, and elect two Delegates to represent each township in a Democratic County Convention to meet at the house of John Clayton in Bloomsburg, on the Monday following, September 7th, 1846, at 12 o'clock, noon, for the purpose of nominating a ticket to be supported at the next October election.

CHARLES R. BUCKALEW, WM. J. IKELER, M. E. JACKSON, THOS. J. HUGHSON, M. R. HOWER.

Standing Committee chosen at the County Convention, September 1845.

E. H. BALDY, GEO. W. HARDER, ENOS MILLER, JOHN YEAGER, MARTIN BILMEYER, STEWART PEARCE, A. M. GANGEWER, SAMUEL CREASY, JACOB D. KLINE.

Standing Committee appointed by a Convention held at Bloomsburg Sept. 16, 1844

We are authorized to say that Silas J. Stockhouse will not be a candidate either for nomination or election to the office of Sheriff at the ensuing election.

THE ELECTION OF DELEGATES OF THE DEMOCRATIC COUNTY CONVENTION COMES OFF ONE WEEK FROM TO-DAY.

These elections should be well attended in order to secure a full and fair expression of the wishes of the people in regard to the candidates to be put in nomination. We trust that a spirit of harmony will prevail in all the steps taken to select a ticket; and that it will afterward receive a hearty and general support.

THE TARIFF.

It is made a matter for fierce accusation, that there are a great body of persons in this State, and elsewhere, who are favorable to lower rates of duty upon importations, than they were in 1841.—There are good reasons for advocating reduced rates of duty, upon protected articles, that did not exist two and three years ago; and there is therefore no ground for complaint or for a just charge of inconsistency against such as may have honestly changed or modified their position, in regard to protective duties since that period.

Four years have now gone by, under the high protective duties of the act of 1842; and this long period has allowed the protected interests to become established. Manufacturers have had the nursing of that act for four years in all,—and for two years since 1844; and will have it for months to come; as the new act does not go into operation until next winter. Now, suppose it requires six months for a manufactory to be established, and get fully under way in business. Eight times this required period, has already elapsed, since the passage of the act of 1842; and as protective duties are said to aid infant manufactures, and to be so intended; we think that they ought now to be satisfied with lower rates of duty, and do something at nursing themselves.

The representatives of the manufacturers, in their communication to Mr. Webster, say that they are willing to have their duties reduced one fourth, or 25 per cent. lower, than the rates of the act of 1842. Are we to extend to them higher protection than they themselves consider necessary?—Are we, in the face of this declaration, to rush into a panic and shout the O'Connell cry of 'repeat?' Is the whole country to be convulsed and business kept unsettled for years, to call back to life an act, that was manifestly imperfect, and, as the manufacturers now acknowledge, was unconsciously restrictive.

Foreign countries have greatly reduced or taken off altogether their tariffs upon our productions since 1844. The reductions in our tariff are not half as great as those made by England in hers.—France has also reduced hers of late years; and Russia has made her ideas of protection bend to the

enlightened spirit of the age. She has also cut down her tariff on foreign productions. Protective Tariffs in this country have heretofore been defended, in a great measure on the ground that while other countries imposed heavy duties upon our productions it was just and necessary for us to lay heavy duties upon theirs. It was said with some force and plausibility; shall we open our ports to countries that keep theirs closed to us?

This state of affairs has changed, and we now stand in now and improved relations toward foreign countries. Statesmen legislating for the interests of the country, will not close their eyes to facts of such magnitude; nor should they unless insensible altogether to the promptings of interest and common sense.

By the passage of the Independent Treasury Law, we have a guaranty that the currency of the country is not to be inflated; that bank capital and bank circulation are not to be increased. If the same spirit of legislation is adhered to by the states, as that which has prompted the establishment of the Sub Treasury, by the General Government; our currency will be sound in future throughout the Union. Now, with the currency of the country in such condition, moderate rates of duty in our tariff laws, are allowable and proper. The spirit of speculation, which is the natural offspring of a bloated paper currency, is the deadliest enemy with which 'domestic industry' can contend; it flatters for a time, but it prostrates in the end; it induces heavy purchases from abroad, and it brings the fearful evil of over into the bosom of the community. A limited, a sound constitutional currency, is the best safeguard of the country against speculation and its consequences; and it allows of the existence of rates of duty that would be unwise under a different state of the currency.

We say then, that since 1844, two additional years of high duties have elapsed, allowing the protected interests to become established;—that since that time, the manufacturers have publicly admitted, the feasibility of reducing protective duties 25 per cent.—that since that time, foreign countries have very radically reduced, or entirely taken off, their duties upon our productions;—and that since that time, the principle of a limited and sound currency, (the best possible aid to our industrial interests) has been asserted and established by the passage of the Independent Treasury Law. Facts like these are not to be disregarded; and their existence justifies a modification of the act of 1842, and also justifies any one in advocating lower rates of duty than were proper in 1841. We do not by this mean to say, that the act of 1846 is perfect. Whenever that law is wrong we shall join heartily in asking its revision and amendment.—We shall join in no absurd cry of, 'the tariff as it is,' in order to shield its errors from the pruning hand of legislation hereafter. But this cry that the country will be ruined, by the modification of the act of 1842, is as ridiculous as it is false; and it deserves, as it will receive, the contempt of the people, and the condemnation of experience.

THE RIGHT GROUND.

The following resolution passed at a Democratic county meeting held in Northampton, entirely expresses our views in relation to the Tariff of '42 and '46. If neighbor Cook can make free trade out of this, he is welcome to do so.

Resolved: That in levying our important duties, for revenue, we are in favor of extending a fair and even liberal protection to our manufacturers, and whenever by untoward legislation, they are deprived of that protection, we stand ready to aid in repair in the error. That although we believe the tariff of 1842 to be unjust and oppressive by reason of its levying duties in many cases unnecessarily high, yet we believe that the tariff act of 1816 will need alteration and correction. That besides some minor details of which we disapprove, the great Iron interest of our State, in coming, if not all of its branches will not be sufficiently protected. That the same is also true in regard to our anthracite coal, and that the interest and wishes of Pennsylvania require at the hands of the next Congress, that this evil shall be remedied; and the Democracy of Northampton hereby pledge themselves that their influence shall be honestly exercised to accomplish this end.

The panic of the politicians is subsiding, and the very good reason for it is, that the country refuses to be frightened. Meantime our neighbor of the Danville Democrat appears to have lost his temper along with his ammunition. Deplorable,—very!

A camp meeting commences on next Monday, at Town Hill, Huntington township Luzerne county. It is held by the Methodist persuasion.

We exposed, last week, the attempt to misrepresent the Democracy in regard to the votes in the senate on Mr. Evan's bill to remit the duties on rail-road iron imported: Our friends may expect plenty of such yarns from the laboratory of panic. It shall however be our endeavor to correct those that rise in our immediate neighborhood.

We alluded to the fact, last week, that at our late courts for this county, the juries were only kept two days and a half. This shows the great dearth of litigation among our citizens and is a most encouraging fact to all who wish well to the county. The habit of keeping out of debt and out of law, is of more consequence to the prosperity of the people, than all the bank laws and tariff laws passed since the foundation of the world.

THE TRUE PRINCIPLE OF LEGISLATION.

The rights of property and the modes of transferring those rights, are the principal subjects treated of by our civil laws. It is indispensable that the law should define and declare what are valid rights in respect to dominion over external things; and that it should guard those rights from forcible or fraudulent infringement, both by preventative and remedial enactments. Otherwise, the peace of society could not be preserved, and the weak would be subjected to the oppression and injustice of the powerful. Further, it is eminently convenient, at least, that the law should prescribe rules for the conveyance of property, or rather, of rights thereon. But there, it is conceived, as a general rule, the law should stop: its proper office is filled; and that when it transcends this limit; when it gives privileges to some persons over others and when it creates artificial beings to own property—to compete with individuals in the acquisition of wealth; it is treading on ground dangerous both to individual and public welfare.

But, the law has been made to transcend this its just limit: it has given undue advantages to some persons over others; it has granted privileges to some unenjoyed by others—exemptions from common liability; it has created monopolies in most of the pursuits of life, agriculture excepted; it has created artificial existences to compete with natural ones in the acquisition of wealth. The injurious consequences of this policy are both clear and alarming; and it becomes us to open our eyes to its true character.

Equality of rights, and not equality of condition, constitutes republican liberty; and whatsoever trenches upon this, is inimical to our system, and is to be contended against. The conditions of men will be varied. No law can equalize the intellects of a people, any more than it can give to all the same physical strength. But it can give them equal rights; and all legislation should keep this object steadily in view.

Upon this principle Democracy plants itself: equal rights to all, special favors to none. Federalism, on the other hand, has continually sought to draw off legislation from this principle, and make it conduce to the interests of a class, or of a few. What were the alien and sedition laws, but an unjust discrimination between different classes of inhabitants? Federalism, by their enactment, prohibited a portion of the inhabitants of the country, from enjoying political rights. New England Federalism opposed the war of 1812 because, although rendered necessary to vindicate the rights and honor of the country, it affected injuriously the interests of a class, the commercial capitalists. It stopped their gains from commerce, and they threatened to cut loose from the union rather than submit to have their profits curtailed. This dollar patriotism, however, was made to bend to the interests and honor of the union as a whole, & we came out of that war with vindicated rights and established character. When we came down to later times, we find federalism, under new names, true to its ancient faith, and advocating measures as unjust and dangerous as those of former times. What was the Bankrupt law, but a sponging act for large speculators? It was a law passed for the direct advantage of some thirty thousand imprudent or fraudulent men, who had earned its passage at the hands of Federalism, by political services rendered in the various panics from '32 to 1840. It was not a law calculated for the unfortunate of all classes in the country; but for a class, and that one the least meritorious that could be selected. The state insolvent laws, were sufficient for the tradesman, the farmer and the mechanic in short for the people generally; but Federalism must legislate for a class, and it selected, the children of folly, and fraud, and crime!—Again, in regard to business Incorporations, it is clear that they operate injuriously upon private rights, and that they are created expressly to benefit a few at the expense of the many. And yet, federalism is their fast advocate and friend! They are in plain English, contrivances by which a few persons can make more money than the rest of the community; contrivances by which, under the sanction of law, a moneyed aristocracy may be built up and perpetuated. A bank is simply an incorporation to manufacture money; this is its office and function. By its operation, the currency of the country is made to fluctuate constantly, both in volume and value, and we are subjected to the delirium of speculation one year, and the pains and penalties of a crash the next. All this naturally results, from the greediness of a few to make money by banking! other species of business incorporations, spring into existence, likewise, from the greediness of a few men to make more money than their neighbors. Manufacturing incorporations, have, of late, become fashionable. 'The law has been,

busy where it had not business,' and has sought to choke down individual enterprise by the establishment of monopoly. The community have been insiduously plundered; and corporate exactions, by the way, are none the less mischievous and unjust because they are indirect and unseen. But further, legislative policy in regard to corporations has now assumed a new and alarming aspect. Not satisfied with the charter advantages which they possess, they have entered the field of politics, clamorous for additional favors from the general Government. And Federalism, loud-mouthed and violent as of old, backs their application with her whole power. We are called on for state laws to create corporations, and then for national laws to specially favor them: Here is a double operation for mischief invited, creation from one source, favor from another; a conjunction of effort in state and national legislation to establish—monopoly!—Let us for a moment put away prejudice and passion, and inquire is such a policy in conformity with any just principle of legislation? Or rather, does it not flagrantly violate natural justice and tend to build up the pecuniary interests of a portion of the community to the detriment of the rest? Can any policy be sound and wise that does not look to the whole country, and to all its interests?—Equal rights to all—special favors to none,' is the just principle by which legislation can be directed; and after stumbling through the realm of sophistry, we must come back to this, as our abiding position. Through clamor, and through opposition, the party of progress and principle, must uphold with unshaken firmness, the doctrine of equal rights, the interests of the whole against the machinations of the few, the principles of Democracy against the assaults of Federalism.

Communication.

Col. Webb.—I was much pleased to see that the Democratic county Convention, in Susquehanna county, which met on the 17th inst. at Montrose, adapted the *à la voce* system of voting on nominations. I hope that our county Convention, which meets on the 7th of September, will adopt this mode of voting, and that it will be the rule in Conventions hereafter. Let the voting be above board, so that the people can know about it, and so that there can be no opportunity of evading responsibility. I attach hereto, the resolutions adopted by the Susquehanna county Convention, upon this subject.

A VOTER.

Mr. G. A. Grow offered the following Resolutions which were adopted: Resolved—That each delegate shall vote in this Convention, by calling aloud the name of the man for whom he votes, at each time of voting. Resolved—That the secretaries be required to keep the proceedings of this Convention in such way as to show for whom each delegate votes at each time of voting.

ARMY OF OCCUPATION.

The latest news from the army gives us nothing very important. Gen. Taylor had arrived at Camargo, with his army on his route to Monterey, where he most probably is by this time. It was not expected that he would receive any opposition until his arrival there.

Four spans of the new bridge, being erected over the North Branch of the Susquehanna at Catawissa, fell last week, crushing several canal boats, but injuring no person. The cause is attributed to the carelessness of the contractors engaged in erecting it.

The above we clip from the Williamsport Democrat, as news to our Catawissa friends and to show that a story loses nothing by travelling.

To the facts. The bridge crosses the river not the canal, nor is the canal within a thousand feet of the portion that fell, and instead of four spans, only a part of one fell, as there was nothing raised above the chords, but the posts and plates, and the workmen had not time though actually engaged to secure it, before the sudden and unexpected squall blew it over. So there were no boats injured nor were the contractors in the least in fault. It was an occurrence beyond the control of the workmen, as it could not be foreseen by them.

More 'Ruin'.—Sixty-three bouncing, rosy-checked country girls, recently engaged at the north by an agent of the Cabbottville Mills, Massachusetts passed through our city to-day on the way to their homes. This certainly does not look much like the realization of the predicted 'ruin' to our manufactory!—Tory paper.

Governor Doer has lately had a return of his malady. He is still sojourning with the Honorable Olney Ballou of Cambridge.