

only rendered yourself ridiculous. Your sarcasms and declamation were alike unavailing. We admired your eloquence, but we smiled at your logic. You were considered as a spoiled child, whose mind as well as constitution had been injured by indulgence, and whose temper was too irritable to brook either mainly admonition or reasonable chastisement. To regain your standing with the public and to propagate an honourable opinion of your candour, the fractious Mr. Madison's administration met with your unbounded approbation: You brought forward and advocated a resolution unequivocally commending the arrangement made with Mr. Erskine, and, so rapidly had you grown upon the esteem of a certain party, that the federalists on that occasion were voluntarily your auxiliaries.—The fervour of your new-born zeal for the President, however, was suspected. There was no occasion for your vote of thanks, because there was no impending danger in the country. It was the dawn of a peace with England, for which Mr. Jefferson as well as Mr. Madison had long sought in vain; a fact which your proposed resolution to the House of Representatives tended to contradict, by implying that Mr. Madison had done more than Mr. Jefferson was willing to do; and, as far as it went, this was an eulogium on yourself for the emity you had manifested against the venerable patriarch of Virginia. The republicans understood you, sir. They resisted with fortitude the malevolence of your denunciations and the incense of your flattery. In the former they beheld the vindictive temper of a disappointed politician; and in the latter, nothing but the cunning of a Jesuit.

Indeed, sir, you will ruin none but your friends. You calumniated Mr. Madison, and he is president; you reproached Mr. Smith, and he is secretary of state; you reviled Mr. Giles, and he enjoys the undiminished confidence of republicans. You espoused the cause of col. Moinoe, and he instantly became unpopular; you praised Mr. Macon, till his political standing has become contemptible;— & your secret connivance with Mr. Gallatin is already ominous of his disgrace. So pernicious is the influence of your panegyric, that were I inclined to superstition, I might attribute the failure of Mr. Erskine's arrangement to the malignant fatality of your friendship, ostensibly avowed for that compact. From the pestilence of your applause there is no escaping with honour; no refuge but in flight from the sphere of its contagion.

The report of the secretary of the treasury appears to be a subject of exultation with your few adherents as well as with the federalists. It has, indeed, sir, not a little surprised the friends of the country and of the administration, that Mr. Gallatin, whom your newspaper pronounces "the greatest financier now living," should not have been able to produce a more respectable budget of the national resources. At a time like the present, when the kingdoms of Europe appear to have conspired to do us wrong, it was naturally to have been expected that the boasted talents of the secretary of the treasury would have produced a system of finance commensurate to the occasion. The report which he has made is probably the performance of one of his clerks, and the public are yet to be astonished, perhaps, with something more praise-worthy from the fruitful invention of the honourable secretary. I am loth to suspect his capacity; but if he does not speedily produce some respectable evidence of his ability, his talents or his integrity will undoubtedly be questioned. It must be confessed, that his official estimates, during the embargo and now, give great scope for the impeachment of his intellectual vigour, and the sudden growth of his private fortune is unfavourable to the supposition that he is the most disinterested of ministers. When a secretary of the treasury, from a yearly salary of four or five thousand, amasses in the short compass of eight years the enormous fortune of two hundred thousand dollars, we are authorised to enquire how he has effected it? If this were a government of England, and Mr. Gallatin a lord Melville, there would be no difficulty in accounting for the circumstance: but it would be too hasty a determination to decide, without further investigation, that Mr. Gallatin had made use of the opportunities which his station affords, to speculate in the funds for his individual benefit; or, that he availed himself of the same opportunities, to become the proprietor of lands which have been sacrificed by the artful representations of the men who purchased from the public. If the honourable secretary has recently transmitted the interest of the Dutch loan to Holland, in specie, we may be assured that he has his reasons for it; and it will require all your ingenuity, sir, to demonstrate that Albert Gallatin, who has drained the country of hard dollars to pay them into the hands of one of the Bonapartes, would have been a proper character to fill the office of secretary of state, to which he aspired? I am not fearful of contradiction when I affirm that he did this act contrary to the inclinations of the president.

Because the secretary of the treasury has made a feeble representation of the funds of the nation, you awkwardly conclude that it is impossible to make a better one; and with your usual logical precision, you attribute the poverty of the treasury to the proceedings of the administration. If we had not some experience of the duplicity of Mr. Gallatin, we might be deluded by your sophistry.—But, sir, after the collusion between you and that man to dishonour Mr. Jefferson, men of discernment have regarded Mr. Gallatin with suspicion.—You certainly have not forgotten the declaration which you made upon the floor of the House of Representatives, that the secretary of the treasury had informed you that the president had attempted, contrary to law, to draw two millions of dollars from the public purse for a secret purpose; and you must also remember how meanly the honourable secretary escaped from the odium of that act of perfidy to Mr. Jefferson and from the disgrace in which he involved you by making you his dupe. It was perfectly understood at the time, that he pacified your rising vengeance by suitable explanations and ardent promises of future atonement. He would have duped you again, sir, had not his private resentments corresponded with your furtive designs; and you owe it more to his passions than to his fidelity that he has submitted to Congress a financial

report which has pained the vigour of administration and given colour and currency to your own unscrupulous reproaches.

Your friends do not seem to be apprized of the ridiculous situation in which they place Mr. Gallatin, when they pronounce him "the greatest financier now living," and yet declare that his last account report "is the fairest view which he can present of the state of the nation." If that document is to be received as the result of the utmost exertion of his abilities, I have no repugnance to denouncing the secretary of the treasury as the most consummate of political impostors. Whilst the revenue from commerce was abundant, an accurate knowledge of the common rules of arithmetic was sufficient to enable him to discharge the duties of his office. It was only when that revenue failed, that he had an opportunity to display the plastic power of his talents. But what has he exhibited? An extraordinary specimen of financial genius, indeed! A choice of wretched expedients; submission to foreign aggressions in front; and loans followed by direct taxes, as the only alternative. Had Mr. Gallatin presented a liberal and just view of the wealth of the nation, it would neither have answered your expectations nor have gratified his malice. Like the utterance of certain witty repartees which we find in the dialogues of comedies, where the first speaker is made to say certain weak and absurd things in order that the second may say smart ones, the annual report of the secretary of the treasury has been timidly and falsely constructed to afford you an opportunity of carping at it. When Mr. Gallatin is treacherous to his duty to corroborate your spleen, you may be as satirical and as scrupulous as you please.

There are curious rumours abroad that the secretary of the treasury means to resign the post he occupies. I beg of you, sir, not to be alarmed by this sarcastic report. Depend upon it that he will never leave the cabinet whilst there is the charter of a national bank to be sold, or a possibility of destroying the reputation of Mr. Madison. I know the ruling passion of his heart and should be sorry to thwart it; but I will resist to the uttermost his endeavours to ruin a virtuous president.

The situation of our foreign affairs arises neither from the imbecility nor from the wickedness of administration. Candid men can perceive in the unparalleled events of modern Europe the real causes of our present embarrassments; and your own conduct for four years past, has in no small degree increased the perplexities of government.—You perjured the affections of the public by your artful professions of patriotism at the commencement of your political career, and you betrayed the popular confidence when your country required the utmost exertion of your faculties. Your first desertion of your friends was distinguished by a peculiar intimacy with a British envoy. Whilst your acrimonious humours sought to taint the character of Mr. Jefferson, and to poison the reputation of Mr. Madison, your wounded pride-pursued consolation in the chariot of Mr. Merry. The city of Washington beheld your eccentric tangent with surprise: But, sir, neither the cheering smiles of an English dame, nor the brilliant ministerial equipage of her lord, could sooth the asperity of your temper nor assuage the pangs of a heart that ragged for the gratification of unlawful vengeance. What a triumphant day was it for the friends of Great Britain, when you were beheld exhausting your frame to the verge of dissolution by a torrent of invective against the neutral policy of America! The author of "War in Disguise" was from that instant freed from the labour of inventing sophisms to overturn the law of nations; he found in your speeches the arguments he wanted; and the declaration of John Randolph became on a sudden the theme of applause at St. James. Sir, you have been the benefactor of your country. Weak men, dazzled by the tinsel of your wit, have been deluded into the ranks of opposition; cunning men, availing themselves of the impetuosity of your mind, have made you an instrument to increase disaffection among republicans; and foreign nations perceiving the prevalence of factions and parties in our councils, have trifled with our honour and despoiled us of our rights.

You have grown extremely tender of the president's reputation; and you tremble for his fate because you imagine that he is surrounded by a junto of unprincipled individuals! Believe me, sir, that Mr. Madison's expansion of mind and fortitude of soul are a sufficient security against the cabals of any combination: He views with equal composure the open hostility of Pickering and the perfidious admonitions of Randolph. Relying upon that band of patriots who will never deceive him, he acts for the good of his country and will cover himself with imperishable renown.

I congratulate you upon the improvement of your natural sagacity. You had already astonished the world with your acute discoveries in politics; but how is our amazement increased when you declare that you perceive in the matrimonial connection of an amiable lady with a member of the Bonaparte family, the commencement of French domination over the United States; treasonable designs in the resignation of his seat in Congress by Mr. Nicholas; and the entire ruin of our free institutions in the vigorous efforts of Mr. Giles to vindicate the rights of the country! To corroborate the perspicacity of your intellect, your friends quote your own predictions, and in the true spirit of impostors hail you as a prophet. Like all other false prophets you will, I doubt not, endeavour to fulfil your own forebodings. As to the means, you will not, of course, be very delicate. To revile Mr. Jefferson, to depreciate Mr. Madison, to defame Mr. Giles, to inculcate suspicions of the Smiths, to collude with Mr. Gallatin, to flatter Mr. Macon, or to use little Mr. Stanford, are modes of conduct perfectly indifferent to you, and alternately preferred as the progress of your machinations requires. Sir, you deceive yourself. This is not the land of the Arabs, nor are you a Mahomet. The Americans are an enlightened people, and you a very different kind of hero from the fugitive of Mecca. It is true, you faintly resemble him in the passive part of his character; for, like him, you retreat from the bustle of life to court in retirement the pleasures of inspiration. Your natural constitution will preclude you from some of the raptures which Mahomet experienced in his cave; but then your envious disposition will be amply gratified by incidents of another complexion, which your chaste imagination has created. "Hoyle's games, ordinaries, cross-roads, brothels, and gaming-houses," with the scenes of which you appear to be so very familiar, afford you great scope for vulgar detraction. Whilst Mr.

Giles is labouring for his country's good, and steadily pursuing the path of glory, he will not deny you the honour of retailing personal anecdotes at second hand, which you might have obtained in a more correct and authentic shape from the mouth of his valet. And, sir, I can assure you, that when his country's welfare is at stake, he will not stop to resent the servile opprobrium of a male gossip; nor retort, at any time, by enquiring whether you go to bed "sorrowful or sober;" or whether your present ghastly appearance has been occasioned by the excess of abstinence or the excess of dissipation.

I admire the facility with which you quote Latin: It is symbolical of your political character; for, in words you are quite a Cato, but in actions as great a tyrant as your abilities and power will permit you to be. Whilst you are fluent in the Roman language, you are destitute of every patriotic virtue of that brave and illustrious people.

As you roll at the Smiths because a female relation of theirs is matrimonially allied to the Bonapartes, it is singular that you have not discovered in a late marriage of the General's daughter more immediate danger to the commonwealth from so close an affinity to the nobility of England.

Can you not perceive, sir, in the son of lord Mansfield, the germ of an aristocracy that is to ruin the American constitutions! I do not despair of seeing, at some future day, a very severe philippic from you upon this theme; for, as you are of the lineage of the princess Pocahontas, you will hardly suffer any other dynasty to reign over the land of one of your ancestors than your own. In this you display a commendable ambition; and your exertions to gain a throne convince us that you are serious in the pursuit of it. If you should succeed, permit me to recommend Mr. Gallatin as prime minister. I know of no man so capable of serving an Indian king. He has very few scruples of conscience, and is never disturbed by those sensations which humanize the heart.—Your secret acquaintance with the amiable Secretary, will convince you of the justness of my panegyric. Experience ought to convince you, that women will bestow their hearts and their hands where they please; and that no blame can attach to the Smiths for a hymeneal connection which they neither sought nor promoted. Accusations of partiality to France have been strenuously advanced against the secretary of state and his brother, because the emperor of the French had captured their property: if this be a criterion, whereby to judge them, how friendly ought they to be to Great Britain, considering that her cruisers have lately seized in Asia several hundred thousand dollars worth of their property! And, sir, what will even your partisans say to the rumored friendship of the Smiths for France, (a calumny which they have enjoyed in company with Mr. Jefferson,) when they read the recent official declaration of the Secretary of State in relation to French captures, wherein he distinctly states, that "property to a considerable amount, belonging to citizens of the United States, has been captured and seized by the French, for violations of the Berlin and Milan decrees and under other pretexts; that in some instances the merchant vessels of the United States have been burnt at sea by French cruisers, and, in others, the indemnity of the vessels and property has been purchased by the means of bills of exchange drawn by the captains of the American vessels upon their owners at a rate imposed by the captors." This, sir, is not the language of a man partial to the cod of St. Cloud. And, I must remind you, that the Smiths have neither paid the interest of the Dutch loan in hard dollars to Louis Napoleon, nor promised Mr. Erskane that the carrying trade should be given up.

I hope, sir, that I have not irritated your temper, nor been so bold as to weaken the tartness of your studied sarcasms. But let me solicit you to spare your friends. Above all, spare the learned and profound Mr. Macon; for although his celebrated bill, which he modestly styles a "navigation law," is notoriously the performance of an ingenious pedlar in expedients behind the curtain, yet it is cruel in you to proclaim that "the manufacture of our laws should be entrusted only to the master workmen of the country." Mr. Macon feels the severity of the reproach, and will think it unkind in a man who has flattered him into his present ridiculous course of politics.

Jan. 25, 1810. CAMILLUS.



January 28, 1810.
Observations made by Mr. GILES on the question of passing the bill for fitting out, &c. all the frigates belonging to the United States.

From this recommendation of the President, as well as from the papers and other information obtained from the Navy Department in relation to this subject, the measure was addressed to the committee by two obvious and powerful considerations.

The one, to preserve the frigates proposed to be repaired from entire destruction.

The other, to employ them as instruments of protection and defence in the event of war, &c.

With respect to the first object, it is to be remarked, the Secretary of the Navy informs you, and this information he believed was founded upon an actual examination of the vessels, that they required material repairs, that they would probably be damaged 30 per cent. by delaying the repairs for one year, and shortly thereafter be totally unworthy of repair. That the present cost of repairs would be about equal to one half of the original cost of new vessels, and that when repaired they would be better vessels than could be built of green timber.—That the repairs of the whole of them could be completed by next fall, if the work was all to be done at this place. Whereas to fell timber for new frigates, and to complete them out of timber now to be procured, would require two or three years, &c. Under these circumstances the committee were left to the alternatives either of giving up these fri-

gates to entire waste and destruction, or to purchase new ones in their stead under all the disadvantages of increased expense, delay in time, and the inconvenience of building them of unseasoned timber, &c. &c. or to provide for repairing the frigates now being, as contemplated in the bill. They preferred the last alternative; and surely it is recommended by every consideration of economy, of expense, economy in time, and the superior quality of the vessels when completed, &c. &c.

Mr. G. said he knew there were gentlemen who thought that it would be better policy to let these frigates go to destruction altogether, and that the money expended upon their repair was money thrown away, or worse, as involving consequential expenses, &c. &c. and that imputations had been thrown out against those who now favoured these establishments, even to a very limited extent, and who formerly opposed them. He had reason to believe also that these imputations, however unavailing, had not been altogether without their effect.

He would, therefore, endeavour to put this subject in its true point of view, by bestowing a few observations on it.

In the first place he would call to the recollection of gentlemen, for they appear to have forgotten or overlooked the circumstance, that the present naval establishment was fixed in the years 1800, 1801, under the administration of Mr. Jefferson, with the approbation and consent of himself, and he believed of every other republican then in Congress. That at that time the establishment was thought a proper and reasonable one; and that after completing the frigates now proposed to be repaired, the establishment will then be less, by three frigates, than was thought proper and reasonable by the republicans at that time. He asked, what circumstances had taken place since 1800, 1801, to justify a further excision of the naval establishment, or with what propriety can those who then consented to that establishment be accused of inconsistency of conduct, or change of political principles, for consenting to an establishment now, less, by three frigates, than they then thought both reasonable and proper.

Since that time the United States have been blessed with a vast increase of population, a vast increase of wealth, particularly mercantile wealth, and increase of revenue, &c. At the same time with an unexampled diminution of public debt, and withal, they have in the mean time had their rights, commercial rights particularly, assailed by both the great belligerents of Europe, without any prospect of relaxation from either, &c. He asked whether they could find in any of these circumstances, causes to justify, at the present moment, dismantling their navy, or cutting off or unerring the naval arm of their government? He presumed the whole of them would naturally produce a contrary tendency. He said these imputations had been thrown out by some gentlemen, for whom he had the highest respect, and, he believed, with the most candid, though mistaken convictions on their minds; but their errors would be easily corrected by an attentive review of the events which preceded the causes, which produced the events, which followed the change of administration in 1800. During the federal administration the federal party conceived the erroneous opinion, and acted under the mistaken impression, that the constitution of the United States wanted energy; and to supply this want they undertook to legislate energy into it. For this purpose they devised expedients to justify it, and resorted to physical force, armies and navies to supply this unperceived fatal defect in the constitution, and to form the essential substitute for energy, which was in their view, the great desideratum of the government.

These measures required enormous expenses; taxes were imposed on the people to defray them; and when they were informed that these expenses were intended to procure energy, they did not believe they were in want of any such energy. They found their rulers were acting under a mistaken vision—that they had departed from the necessary practical objects of the government, and gone in quest of visionary theories, which existed only in their own deluded imaginations, which could be of no practical use to the people, and which cost them vast sums of money, &c. &c. They therefore took the government out of federal hands, and put it into the hands of their opponents—the republican party. The visionary theory of energy was, therefore, the fatal error of the federal party; and that error deprived it of the power of the nation. The government being thus placed in the hands of the republicans, whilst heated with the zeal of opposition to the federal doctrines, and flushed with their recent triumph, it was natural for them, with the best intentions, to run into the opposite extreme, to go too far in the relaxations of the powers of the government, and to indulge themselves in the delightful visions of extending the range of individual liberty. They were, therefore, in danger of relaxing the powers of government so far, as to deprive it of the means of its own preservation and execution for domestic objects; and to impair or destroy its efficacy in resisting foreign aggressions. The theory, therefore, of the republicans, as opposed to that of the federalists, was the relaxation of governmental restraints, or the extension of individual liberty. It was natural that in the vibration of the political pendulum it should go from one extreme to another; and that this has been too much the case with the republican administration, he regretted to say he feared would be demonstrated by a very superficial review of the events of the last two or three years. He said it had been his fortune to oppose both of these extremes—that he thought the true policy of the United States would be found in the medium between these two extremes.

Mr. G. said, the second consideration which induced the committee to report the bill, was to employ the frigates as instruments of protection and defence, and even of annoyance in the event of war. Gentlemen have asked whether the whole of the frigates are competent to resist the British fleet, or even a small squadron of it? To which it is answered, no, they are not. But it by no means follows, that because they are incompetent to achieve that splendid exploit, that therefore they cannot be of any use at all. He conceived they might be materially useful in defending a town in case of a naval attack. They would form an essential part of a combined force for that object. Fortifications on land have been erected at an immense expense; gun boats have been provided for the defence of the seaport towns &c. and frigates are in many respects essential to their combined operation. They are besides important in furnishing officers and men for the gun boats, &c. &c.—and it has always been