

The Treasury, for the sale of public lands, twenty two millions nine hundred and ninety-six thousand five hundred and forty five dollars. In bringing this subject to view, I consider it my duty to submit to Congress, whether it may not be advisable to extend to the purchasers of these lands, in consideration of the unfavorable change which has occurred since the sales, a reasonable indulgence. It is known that the purchases were made when the price of every article had risen to its greatest height, and that the instalments are becoming due at a period of great depression. It is presumed that some plan may be devised, by the wisdom of Congress, compatible with the public interest, which would afford great relief to these purchasers.

Considerable progress has been made, during the present season, in examining the coast of its bays, and other inlets; in the collection of materials, and in the construction of fortifications for the defence of the Union, at several of the positions at which it has been decided to erect such works. At Mobile Point and Dauphin Island, and at the Rigolets, leading to Lake Pontchartrain materials, to a considerable amount, have been collected, and all the necessary preparations made for the commencement of the works. At Old Point Comfort, at the mouth of James River, and at the Rip-rap, on the opposite shore, in the Chesapeake Bay, materials, to a vast amount, have been in part required; and at the Old Point some progress has been made in the construction of the fortification, which is on a very extensive scale. The work at Fort Washington, on this river will be completed early in the next spring; and that on the Pea patch, in the Delaware, in the course of the next season. Fort Diamond, at the Narrows, in the Harbor of New-York, will be finished this year. The works at Boston, New York, Baltimore, Norfolk, Charleston, and Niagara, have been in part required; and the coast of North-Carolina, extending south to Cape Fear, has been examined, as have likewise other parts of the coast eastward of Boston. Great exertions have been made to push forward these works with the utmost dispatch possible; but when their extent is considered, with the important purposes for which they are intended, the defence of the whole coast, and, in consequence, of the whole interior, and that they are to last for ages, it will be manifest that a well digested plan, founded on military principles, connecting the whole together, combining security with economy, could not be prepared without repeated examinations of the most exposed and difficult parts, and that it would also take considerable time to collect the materials at the several points where they would be required. From all the light that has been shed on this subject, I am satisfied that every favorable anticipation which has been formed of this great undertaking will be verified, and that, when completed, it will afford very great, if not complete, protection to our Atlantic frontier, in the event of another war; a protection sufficient to counterbalance, in a single campaign, with an enemy powerful at sea, the expense of all these works, without taking into the estimate the saving of the lives of so many of our citizens, the protection of our towns and other property, or the tendency of such works to prevent war.

Our military positions have been maintained at Belle Point, on the Arkansas, at Council Bluffs on the Missouri, at St. Peter's on the Mississippi, and at Green Bay, on the upper Lakes. Commodious barracks have already been erected at most of these posts, with such works as were necessary for their defence. Progress has also been made in opening communications between them, and in raising supplies at each for the support of the troops, by their own labor—particularly those most remote.

With the Indians peace has been preserved, and a progress made in carrying into effect the act of Congress making an appropriation for their civilization, with the prospect of favorable results. As connected equally with both these objects, our trade with those tribes is thought to merit the attention of Congress. In their original state, game is their sustenance, and war their occupation; and, if they find no employment from civilized powers, they destroy each other. Left to themselves, their extirpation is inevitable. By a judicious regulation of our trade with them, we supply their wants, administer to their comforts, and gradually, as the game retires, draw them to us. By maintaining posts far in the interior, we acquire a more thorough and direct control over them; without which it is confidently believed that a complete change in their manners can never be accomplished. By such posts, aided by a proper regulation of our trade with them, and a judicious civil administration over them, to be provided for by law, we shall, it is presumed, be enabled not only to protect our own settlements from their savage incursions, and preserve peace among the several tribes, but accomplish also the great purpose of their civilization.

Considerable progress has also been made in the construction of ships of war, some of which have been launched in the course of the present year.

Our peace with the powers on the coast of Barbary has been preserved, but we owe it altogether to the presence of our squadron in the Mediterranean. It has been found equally necessary to employ some of our vessels for the protection of our commerce in the Indian sea, the Pacific, and along the Atlantic coast. The interests which we have depending in those quarters, which have been much improved of late, are of great extent, and of high importance to the nation, as well as to the parties concerned, and would undoubtedly suffer, if such protection was not extended to them. In execution of the law of the last session, for the suppression of the Slave Trade, some of our public ships have also been employed on the coast of Africa, where several captures have already been made of vessels engaged in that disgraceful traffic.

JAMES MONROE.

Washington, November 14, 1820.

Legislature of North Carolina.

Monday, Nov. 20, 1820.

This being the day appointed by law for the meeting of the General Assembly of North-Carolina, a very large majority of the Members of each House appeared, were qualified and took their seats. Pleasant Henderson and Wm. B. Lockhart, were appointed Clerks of the House of Commons, and Robert Williams and Benj. H. Covington, Clerks of the Senate. Bartlett Tancey was unanimously chosen Speaker of the Senate, and Romulus M. Saunders Speaker of the House of Commons.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

On motion of Mr. Moore, a writ of election issued, requiring the Sheriff of the county of Columbus, to hold an election on the 30th inst. to supply the place of Latham Williams, dec'd late a Representative from said county.

Tuesday, Nov. 21.

Mr. Alston presented the following Resolution: Resolved, That a joint select Committee, consisting of three, on the part of this House, be appointed to join a similar Committee as may be appointed on the part of the Senate, to investigate the accounts and enquire into the official conduct of John Haywood, Public Treasurer of the State of North-Carolina, and that their enquiry also extend to the time he acted without taking an oath of office, or having entered into bond and security as the law directs, and that the same committee have power to send for persons and papers, and to take all necessary and proper measures to insure a full and complete investigation.

In introducing this resolution, Mr. Alston referred to what took place at the last session, in the House of Commons, on this subject, and denied the correctness of a report which was then made by several gentlemen of what he said—Although Mr. Alston made no specific charges against the Treasurer, he said, that from what he had heard, he had reason to believe that all was not right in his official life, and that, at any rate, in a government like ours, public officers should be called frequently to account. He said, too, there were abuses in the Comptroller's Office which ought to be rectified: That the vouchers were often kept in a negligent way, &c.

Mr. Moore, (from Brunswick) moved to lay the resolution on the table, and in doing so he admitted in its fullest extent, the propriety of investigating as often as necessary, the accounts of public officers. From an ample and thorough examination of his accounts, he said the Treasurer had nothing to fear; that he was an honest and faithful servant of the public, who had grown grey in their service, and now was, and always had been able and willing to account for the last farthing of the public money which had come to his hands. Mr. Moore said that Mr. Alston was in two much haste in submitting his resolutions; that if he had waited a few days, the Treasurer would have delivered his annual report on the state of the Treasury, which would furnish Mr. Alston with a pretext for his examination. Mr. Moore said the report of the Treasurer was now ready, and was only delayed until the Governor had made his communication to the Assembly; that common decency as well as parliamentary usage required that it should be delayed until such communication was made by the Chief Magistrate, and that in that report, the Treasurer had asked, himself, for an examination into his accounts. Mr. Moore assured Mr. Alston, that neither the Treasurer or his friends wished to avoid an investigation into his official life; that on the contrary, they courted it, well convinced that the dark and mysterious insinuations which had been made against him would eventuate in his triumph, and in the disgrace of those who made them.

Mr. Mebane, (from Orange) said, that on several occasions he had been a member of the Committee of Finance, and in the discharge of his duties as such, had always examined with care, the accounts and vouchers of the Treasurer and Comptroller, and always found them correct. He had never heard of the abuses in the Comptroller's Office, complained of by Mr. Alston.

The resolution was ordered to lie on the table. Messrs. Graves and Turner were appointed on the part of this House to join a committee from the Senate to inform the Governor, that the two Houses were organized, and were ready to receive any communication he might think proper to make.

Mr. Moore presented the petition of Ephraim Hart, of New York, praying remuneration for certain certificates of his state, barred by the statute of limitation—Referred to a select committee.

A select joint committee was formed, by Resolution, to prepare titles of Order, so that each House shall perfect its own business. The committee consists of Messrs. Comer, Owen, Wilborn, Williams and Locke, of the Senate, and Messrs. Isdell, Mebane, Scott, Cameron and Spencer, of the Commons.

Wednesday, Nov. 22.

The two Houses balloted for three engraving clerks. Thomas T. Armstrong and John F. Forrest had each a majority, and were declared duly elected.

Mr. Hillman presented a petition and bill, to secure to Mary S. Butler such property as she may hereafter acquire—Rejected.

On motion of Mr. Scott, a message was sent to the Senate proposing to ballot for a judge of the Superior Court, on Saturday, to fill the vacancy occasioned by A. D. Murphy's resignation. Wm. Norwood, of Hillsborough was nominated.

Received from his Excellency Governor Branch the following Message.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,

Raleigh, November 22 1820.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State of North-Carolina,

GENTLEMEN—Having on former, and somewhat recent occasions, entered extensively into the most prominent subjects of State policy, but little remains for me at this time to superadd, save that of a reiteration of the same doctrines, together with a few reflections on the times, and the occurrences growing out of them. In discharging this duty, I shall, as I have been wont to do, deal frankly with you; for I can see no reason why, in this, our parting interview, a different course should be pursued.—Indeed the impulses of a heart glowing with a grateful recollection of the renewed instances of confidence reposed in me by my Fellow-Citizens would forbid a different course.

I cannot, however, expect that all should unite with me in sentiment in the reflections I am about to introduce, presenting so many different aspects and viewed through so many different mediums. Nevertheless it is indisputable that when, in the progress of time, and the unerring development of events measures originally designed to promote the general interest, are found to be subversive of those interests, and fraught with consequences not anticipated; that it becomes an imperious duty with those entrusted with the sovereign power to pause and ponder well before they make further advances, and calmly and dispassionately to take a retrospect of the past, in order that they may be the better able to discern between adverse fortune, flowing from human frailty and human indiscretion, and those national reverses and calamities which no human foresight or prudence could avert. But on such a retrospect, I am fully persuaded the patriotic bosom will find abundant cause to dilate with gratitude, and will be pleasurably impelled to offer up to the

Throne of Omnipotence the warmest acknowledgements.

Allow me then, primarily to solicit your attention to the causes and character of our pecuniary embarrassments which have for the last twelve or eighteen months elicited more feeling, and I might say, more interperate discussion, than every other subject combined; for it is but too manifest, that we have at this time a conflict of sentiment, generated by that inveterate hostility which has ever been found to exist between Creditor and Debtor, the one striving not only to maintain and extend the influence to which they consider themselves fairly entitled, but through the agency of Banks &c. making vigorous efforts to bind their victims' hand and foot, that they may be the more ready & obedient sacrifice. To other equally inordinate and regardless of the obligations of justice, seizing with avidity and impassioned zeal the most trivial pretences to avert from their shoulders their due portion of the distresses of the country, induced as much by their own imprudences and extravagances as from any other cause.

To you has been intrusted for a season the scales of justice, and let me interest you to hold them with a firm and steady hand, yielding neither to the wanton encroachments of the one, or the licentious clamors of the other.

That much, yes very much of those embarrassments may be fairly attributed to the unreasonably multiplication of Banks, and the excessive issue of their paper far beyond their capacity to redeem, will not be denied. It therefore becomes your invidious duty, so to regulate those unbridled institutions as to give stability to their issues, and prevent, as far as practicable, the ruinous consequences resulting to the community from the versatility of its character and the fluctuation in its value. This obligation is surely as strong as though the power to make money and to regulate the value thereof, had been expressly delegated; for unless something is done, what will prevent the recurrence of similar embarrassments even after we are temporarily relieved from the present pressure.

I anticipate that it will be said that it is hazardous to press the Banks at this time, or to attempt, by the adoption of energetic measures, the correction of the abuses of those institutions; or, in other words, that we had better wait until the patient is restored to health before we call in the Physician. To obviate this objection, which is certainly more specious than solid, I should be disposed to give the Banks their own time to resume specie payments, provided that time was a reasonable one; but to tell the nation in plain terms, that if after this you will not profit by the knowledge you have gained from experience, you shall be disfranchised and razed to your very foundations, to which should be annexed the heaviest legal sanctions known to our law.

Their Charters, it may be thought, already provide for the payment of their notes in specie; but it is manifest that from some cause or other the legal obligation, if any, is treated with derision, and the omnipotence of Banks has become almost proverbial: If in this particular I am wrong, I should be gratified to be convinced of my error by practical demonstration; if right, the sooner it is known the better, in order that the people may no longer be deluded by the vagaries of a wild fancy, but may in due season "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." I am not disposed to assert, neither do I believe, that the Banks have been the sole cause of our difficulties; for the people themselves, by an indulgence in profligate and extravagant habits, are justly chargeable for a full portion, and grievously are they sustaining the demands of retributive justice; for they may be said, under the distressing pressure, to have shed, and to be still shedding drops of blood. But is it equitable, I would ask, that they should not only suffer for their own misconduct, but for the misconduct of others? I apprehend not. The farmer must not only give up the profits of his farm, but the farm itself, to meet the demands of his creditors. The same may be said of the merchant, and indeed of every branch of industry, save that of the Stockholder, and the Stockholder alone; but by some species of legerdemain incomprehensible to a plain man, some of the Banks when hard pressed, instead of making the ordinary sacrifices to meet the demands of justice, indignantly close their vaults, and tell the holders of their notes with ineffable contempt, that it is true they have some half a million or million of specie on hand, and in addition thereto have such funds as might probably answer as well as the specie, and that although these funds have cost them little or nothing, the premium having been advanced by their needy customers, for the purpose of obtaining additional accommodation at Bank, that they nevertheless have it in their power to make a profit thereon and enhance their dividends, and that upon a full view of all the circumstances, it will be to the interest of the Bank to decline payment altogether. Suppose an individual was to be guilty of the same conduct, would he not be universally stigmatised, and would he not deservedly incur the epithet of swindler. By what species of sophistry, then, or in what system of ethics can it be found, that an individual shall be thus degraded and stripped even to the last cow that gives sustenance to his family, to meet the demands of his creditors, that does not equally apply to an association of individuals under the character of Bank Stockholders, Bank Directors, or what not?

The principle, I apprehend, is alike applicable to all; but the practice in this our day is very different, for as I have observed above, do you find the Stockholder giving up his dividend to sustain the character of his Bank or making the ordinary sacrifices to procure the specie or what may be deemed an equivalent for specie to redeem his paper? No: on the contrary, you find him securely entrenched behind his impregnable ramparts, drawing his eight, ten or twelve per cent interest, and defying the storm which his own cupidity has contributed to excite.

But it may be impatiently asked, what shall be done to relieve the people from their present unparalleled burthens? I must candidly ac-

knowledge that I have no quick nostrums to offer you. Neither have I been able to devise any system myself to afford a radical renovation, save that of putting our shoulders to the wheel and practising the greatest frugality and industry. For we have, on a former occasion, tried a suspension law, and what good did it do? In addition to an accumulation of debt and a relaxation of morals, it left the corroding idea that we had in making an ineffectual effort to do what we had no right to do, inflicted a wound on our constitution, that sacred inheritance, which is so correctly and emphatically called the palladium of our rights.

The emission of more money, under some form or other, may perhaps be a favorite expedient with some, but I pray you to pause and reflect well before you resort to such desperate remedies. For, how can the intelligent mind doubt for a moment as to the proper construction to be put on our Constitution in regard to this subject? It appears to me to have been evidently the intention of the Convention to place the currency of the country under the exclusive control of the Congress of the United States, and to proclude the individual States from legislating on the subject. And what language can I use to enforce my idea better adapted to the occasion than the language of the Constitution itself, in the 1st art. sec. 8th, the power to coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin is expressly given to Congress, and in the 10th sec. the States are as expressly forbidden to coin money, emit bills of credit, or make any thing but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts.

Some years past the Legislature without due reflection, I am persuaded, and merely to supply our citizens with change, directed the issuing of a small quantity of Treasury Notes or certificates. As yet, from the limited quantity emitted, no very serious mischiefs have resulted; but if it should unfortunately be drawn into a precedent, and the Legislature should, at any future period, direct the issuing of a large quantity to supply the defect of our circulating medium, we may then bid adieu to the restoration of a wholesome currency, and take a long, long farewell of the salutary provisions of the Constitution, unless peradventure a redeeming spirit should be found in the judiciary of our country.

The other expedients that have been spoken of are in my opinion, equally vain and nugatory, and if reduced to practice, will be found to be worse than the disease.

The conclusion, then, of the whole matter is this, that it is your duty to legislate efficiently on the subject above referred to, and to place those abused institutions on such a basis as will promise stability and the greatest uniformity in their issues, and thereby prevent those rapid appreciations and depreciations which may be correctly called the Pandora's Box, from whence have flowed so many deleterious consequences. For, by the establishment of Banks, money is not only made bad, but by their failure to pay specie, the value thereof is indirectly regulated, and thus the salutary provisions of our constitution are virtually defeated.

It is far from being my wish to injure the character of our Banks, or cause their paper to depreciate still more! My solicitude is to direct your attention to the most eligible ways and means to re-establish their credit and place their paper on a par with specie, the only standard of value that can be relied on: for I take pleasure in saying, that there are, in my opinion, but few institutions of the kind in the Union more solvent, and none where fewer cases of individual moral turpitude can be found.

The Judiciary Department of our State, tho' much indebted to the wise and liberal policy of your immediate predecessors for an important arrangement in the Supreme branch of it, is still in many respects, defective. As an evidence, advert to the appointments and resignations which have taken place for the last six or eight years.—And do they not present to those disposed to smile and smile sarcastically, somewhat of a ludicrous scene? And, indeed, if I may be permitted to speak plainly, does it not manifestly degrade the character of the State, impair the usefulness of that department of our government; and at the same time wound the honorable sensibilities of the reflecting part of the community? If economy is the object, I pray you to examine the expenses that have been incurred by the State, in convening the Council for the purpose of filling vacancies occasioned by the resignation of our Judges, and you will then find that the trifling addition to the salary requisite to retain them on the Bench, would be the best economy you could practise. This, however, is not, in my opinion, our true policy. A diminution of their labors, which would be virtually an increase of salary, is indubitably the remedy called for by experience.

There are two ways by which this may be done.—The one by the restoration of the district principle, new-modelled and refined; the other, by the creation of two or three additional circuits. The first I shall never think of, but with the most anxious solicitude to see re-established; for I have ever viewed this feature in our old system, the offspring of revolutionary times, with the most profound veneration and respect for the wisdom of our ancestors, from whose pure and patriotic heads and hearts it flowed; mingled at the same time with the most poignant regrets for the rash act that expunged it from our Statute Book. If, however, this change, so desirable and inestimable in itself, should be deemed impracticable, I would respectfully submit, as a dernier resort, the propriety of making two additional circuits.

Again—The organization of our County Courts, or quarterly sessions, it seems to me, may be much improved; and with due deference, I will take the liberty of submitting for your consideration an idea or two, suggested not only by my own reflections on the subject, but supported by the concurring opinions of some of our most experienced and intelligent citizens.—Innovations, I admit, should be strictly scrutinized before they receive the countenance and approbation of the Legislature; but