

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE,

Raleigh, N. C. November 19, 1823.

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

GENTLEMEN.—The occurrences since the adjournment of the last session of the General Assembly, have been such as usually grow out of circumstances natural, or common to the regulations of the State. The progress of our internal improvements will perhaps be found as great as funds and circumstances would allow. The misapplication and waste of means have heretofore retarded the great work of improvement, involved us in difficulties, and produced a depression of public spirit, from which we have not yet recovered; and but for the wisdom of the last Legislature, in commencing a new plan, by beginning at the mouths of our rivers and proceeding gradually and effectually upwards, the people would have sunk into a state of indifference, to say the least, from which it would have required many years to rouse them to renewed interest and confidence. The appropriation made by the last Legislature, for the purpose of deepening the Flats in the Cape-Fear, below Wilmington, has, so far as I can learn, excited a confidence and zeal highly favorable to the cause of internal improvement; and the success which has already resulted from the embankment which has been erected at the upper Flats or Bulkhead, has fully realized the expectations of all acquainted with the topography of that part of the river. It has been satisfactorily ascertained, that at least twelve inches of water have been gained since the completion of that embankment, although that is only a part of the work contemplated to be done at that place. From the success which has thus far attended these works, we may confidently expect that when the whole shall have been finished, the expectations of the public will be speedily realized in the effect which it will produce on our commerce. Should this improvement in the navigation of the river, from the Bar to Wilmington, admit vessels over the Flats carrying double the burden of those that could formerly pass, it is not extravagant to calculate that double the tonnage, per annum, will, in a few years hence, enter that port, that has done heretofore; and, consequently, that there will be an increased demand, in the same ratio, for the produce of our citizens. It is easy to see what a great increase of individual and state wealth this must lead to. A contract for constructing these works was effected by the State Engineer for fifteen thousand dollars, (five thousand less than the sum appropriated;) and it is satisfactory to learn, that the whole can be completed for that sum. I will indulge the hope that the system which has been thus commenced, will be continued in a progress commensurate with the means of the State. The opening of Roanoke Inlet is an object of the highest importance, when we consider its relation to the trade of the Roanoke River and its tributaries. Nothing would contribute more to raise the standing, and increase the wealth and prosperity of the State; and if it be practicable and within our means, North-Carolina ought never to relinquish it. The Roanoke Navigation Company have, at length, extended the canal at the Great Falls to Weldon's Orchard. From the Orchard to the River below, there is a portage. I respectfully recommend to your consideration, whether it would not be expedient for North-Carolina to carry the canal to the river, either by subscribing for the unappropriated shares in that company, or by such other means as your wisdom may dictate. It is worthy of the enquiry of the Legislature to ascertain whether there are not other obstructions at or near the mouths of our rivers, the removal of which would cause a similar effect on our trade with that contemplated by the opening of the Cape-Fear, below Wilmington.

Our Public Roads should claim your serious consideration. A vast majority of the farming community are compelled, from their location, to go to market by roads. They are not interested immediately in the clearing of our rivers, except (as in the case of the Cape-Fear below Wilmington) it is to have a general effect on the trade of the State. Our roads are bad, except where nature has made them good; and in some parts of the country, it is very difficult for the farmer to carry his produce to market. From the attention which has been paid to the navigation of our rivers, the people living remote from them have a right to expect a correspondent spirit in regard to roads, and the uniform devotion of their representatives to their interests and wishes, is a pledge that they will not be disappointed. The present system of repairing roads, which has existed for a long time, is very defective, both as to its unequal operation on the people, and the temporary, unsubstantial repairs that are generally made, which seldom last longer than the fall of a heavy rain.—Should the Legislature deem it expedient to open new roads, a different mode must be adopted of keeping them in repair: and it would be well to make an experiment at once, as the present method is so obviously inefficient and unequal in its operation. Should you think it advisable to do so, it is with you to devise the mode.

The liberal aid proffered by the last Legislature to such agricultural societies as were, or might be formed in different parts of the State, has, it is hoped, produced the dawn of a new era in the improvement of our agriculture. It is encouraging to learn, that in many counties societies have been instituted; but it is a strong proof of the difficulty of correcting long established habits and methods of culture, that many counties have not availed themselves of the proffered encouragement, and is the best argument that can be offered for the continuance of Legislative patronage. Such is the rooted strength of old customs and modes of farming, particularly amongst us, that we must expect improvement to be gradual; and should Legislative wisdom deem it expedient to keep the subject alive for some years, we shall, I think, witness a gradual march in improvement. Were each successive Legislature to throw in its mite only, in the way that it may deem most expedient, it would doubtless be productive of great good. The American Farmer, an invaluable agricultural paper, published in Baltimore, by Mr. J. S. Skinner, has spread a great deal of useful information among our planters, and has done much good. If the Legislature would present each agricultural society in the State with a few copies of this work, it would be of great service to them in their meetings, and at other times when they might wish to examine them. I trust it will not be deemed chimerical to recommend the purchase of a small Farm near our University, to be put under the care of a scientific and practical farmer, who should, besides a small salary, given as an additional inducement for one qualified to offer, be allowed the produce of the Farm, which should be cultivated in the highest order. On this Farm experiments should be made, under the direction of the Professor of Chemistry, in manuring, as to kind, quality and manner of applying and in the various methods of cultivating different articles of common growth, and such as it might be deemed important to introduce from abroad. The person having charge of the Farm should understand the mechanism and use of the most improved implements of husbandry, and also be well informed in the different departments

of domestic economy. It is unnecessary to be more minute, as my design is only to sketch an outline of the plan which some reflection has suggested to my mind. Let the students of the University, of the two higher classes, accompanied by the Professor of Chemistry, visit this little Farm at such times as might be fixed upon by the Faculty of the University, and there see and learn the usefulness and beauty of husbandry. What a stock of useful knowledge would this enable our young men to carry with them into the bosom of society! The utility and practicality of this plan derives much support from the assurance which we may feel, that the able and indefatigable Faculty of our university would cheerfully co-operate in the attainment of the important objects in view.

The last General Assembly distinguished itself by the passage of the law abolishing imprisonment for debt. Should that humane law be permitted to remain in force for a few years, experience will demonstrate that it will not operate any inconvenience to the community, but will curtail the extension of credit, and the numerous lawsuits consequent thereon. Our country will no longer present the odious spectacle of public prisons filled with the unfortunate, many of them to gratify an unhallowed feeling of revenge in a creditor, and the people will be drawn from ruinous speculations and injudicious credit, to habits of industry and economy. I sincerely hope that this relic of barbarity—this stain upon our free institutions—is now blotted from our code forever; and that the unfortunate, who should rather claim our compassion and charity, shall no longer be torn from helpless families, and confined with criminals in loathsome prisons. Our criminal code appears to me to require amendment. It was recommended to the Legislature by my worthy and lamented predecessor, a few sessions past, to strike from the law respecting perjury the punishment of cropping. With the advance of civilization under our free and enlightened government, it is certainly proper that we should from time to time examine our laws and adapt them to the moral condition of the people. A law that suited men one hundred years ago would not suit them now; and in the lapse of a century from this time, our posterity will no doubt be astonished to find our code marred with this barbarous punishment; when they shall have adopted one, equally calculated to answer the end of the law, whilst the door of reformation is not closed on its unhappy victim. But what can induce a man, degraded and depraved, to amend his life with a mark of infamy on his head, that must follow him wherever he goes, and exclude him forever from society? The punishment of crimes is intended to deter persons from the commission of them; but every wise law will certainly aim at a reformation of the person punished, or at least will not prevent it. It is submitted to your wisdom, whether the punishment for counterfeiting would not be a sufficient penalty to the perjury law, excluding the whipping, and retaining the disqualification to give evidence. I would further recommend to your serious deliberation, whether it would not be expedient to abolish entirely the punishment of whipping; and whether the punishment of theft, under any circumstances, should be equal to that of murder.

Since my appointment to the Executive, I have witnessed with much concern, the frequency of imprisonment for common offences of assault and battery. I am certainly an enemy to a loose and inefficient police; but I cannot conceive that the power vested in our courts of imprisoning in every case of assault and battery, is at all necessary for the security of the peace and good order of society. Shall we throw a fellow citizen, possessing all the honest and honorable feelings of our nature, into a dungeon with persons charged with, or convicted of, ignominious crimes? I respectfully suggest to your honorable body, whether it would not be expedient to abolish imprisonment for this offence, except where there clearly appears to be an intention to kill, or the person offending is unable to pay a fine, or the assault is made on a woman.

I have received from the purchasers of the Cherokee lands, complaints of a very serious nature against the Indians, who pretend to be entitled to a reservation of six hundred and forty acres of land each, reserved to them by the treaty of 1817 and '19. For the protection of those honest citizens, who purchased on the credit of the State, and the insurance of better sales of the land unsold than the last sales made by our Agent declare, I would recommend this subject to your mature deliberation. I have in my possession, letters and papers that will throw much light on the subject, which shall be laid before you in good time.

Accompanying this communication, are the resignations of the justices of the peace, and field officers of the militia, as have been received during the recess; together with my Letter Book, and such letters and documents as are proper to be laid before you.

With the highest respect, and consideration,

I have the honor to be, gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,
GABRIEL HOLMES.

From the Northern Sentinel.

THE PRESIDENCY, No. IV.

Audire est operis pretium.—HONACB

When Aristotle wanted to prove his fanciful doctrine of substantial forms, he contended that the projected figure was concealed in the marble block, from which it was to be produced, and that all a Praxiteles, or any other sculptor had to do, was to chip away "the limbs and outward flourishes," or excrescences of the stone, and the statue would appear. It is to be regretted that the supporters of Mr. CRAWFORD are not capable of using the chissel of a Phidias, though even then they could not form their political block into a prominent figure, because the figure does not lie within, and can never be produced as a substantial form. It is time for them to give up their attempts as hopeless, for they may be assured that the people of the United States will never be cajoled into the belief that substantial talent exists where there is very little more than the shadow; or, to continue our simile, where nothing appears but the block of marble.

We would not be understood as quarrelling with Mr. CRAWFORD's literary attainments; for aught we know, they may be very considerable, tho' we believe they have never been elicited; but we find fault with his want of political acquirements; for if he possesses any; they also, have never been drawn forth by any exercise of judgment, or force of execution, to warrant the assertion, so vehemently made, that "he is a man of first rate abilities." If he is, and with these abilities, possesses a firm and upright political mind, free from local prejudices, and resolutely bent upon cherishing the best means of political security, with all our hearts, make him President! His advocate, in the Enquirer, wishes to substantiate these things; but notwithstanding his dispassionate and positive assertions that envy of Mr. C's abilities and political uprightiness, and the determination of Governor Clarke to destroy him, are the primitive causes of the opposition he has met, it is evident to the slightest understanding, that the causes of opposition are more strongly grounded, and that there must be a much more powerful predication on

the minds of the people, than these, to operate the retrograde movements of Mr. CRAWFORD's popularity, and the rapid advance of Mr. CALHOUN's. We presume that the friends of the former will not now deny that the latter has left him completely in the distance; for that would be politically sinning against the light of conviction.

We have before mentioned the "Fellow Citizen," of the Richmond Enquirer. It is really afflicting to observe the solemn and serious manner in which he asserts that the Presidential controversy should be carried on; and more particularly that it should be with decency of language and temperance and judgment, and yet he has neither temperance nor decency; for he proceeds to vilify, most outrageously, every one who dares think Mr. CRAWFORD inferior to Mr. CALHOUN, for the office sought. It is true that, in all cases, he does not this in direct terms, but in effect always. The unhappy Editor of what he calls the pseudo Patriot, together with Governor Clarke; the Washington Republican, and the gentlemen behind the curtains all receive the dispassionate condemnation of this advocate of reasonable investigation, in language sufficiently vituperous to disgrace candour and increase the vulgarity of Billingsgate vociferation. He professes to be mild; yet is all the time in a passion; so that we may correctly apply to him the words of the shrew of Shakespeare—

"A mad cap creature, and protesting Jack,
That thinks, with words, to face the matter out."

We would thank him to inform us who the gentlemen behind the curtain are—and whose curtain?—Mr. CRAWFORD's, Mr. CALHOUN's or Mr. ADAMS's? That the first gentleman acts behind a curtain, or an ombres chinois, we can readily believe; that the second operates clandestinely, his political enemies have never ventured to declare; and of the last, it is unnecessary, at present, to speak, as his shadows are not likely to be consolidated into a substance. We would not, by this expression, be understood to derogate from the apparent claims of Mr. ADAMS; for we are free to declare, that were not those claims superceded by what we conscientiously believe to be the superiority of Mr. CALHOUN, he should have our support, weak as it is, in preference to Mr. CRAWFORD.

Speaking of Mr. CRAWFORD's talents, the writer in the Enquirer, asks which of the candidates has displayed a talent which he is not able to reach? We ask, which has not? The comparison made between him, and either Mr. CALHOUN or Mr. ADAMS, would be completely superfluous, since it has been so often drawn to the irrefutable advantage of Mr. CRAWFORD. If he be able to reach the exercise of talent displayed by Mr. CALHOUN, why has he never done so? Opportunity has not been wanting—yet, as far as scrutiny has been able to penetrate, it has not been embraced! But how does it prove Mr. CRAWFORD a man of talent, to ask what his opponents have done? If Mr. CALHOUN had displayed no talent in the science of government; and it is notorious that he has evinced the greatest a statesman can possess; patriotism, invincible firmness, judgment, research, integrity—and—no intrigue—it does not therefore follow that Mr. CRAWFORD has.

The friends of Mr. CALHOUN have never thus reasoned; but fairly exposed to public view, those efforts of splendid genius, which, ever exerted for the public good, and not directed by local prejudices, have gained him a place in the esteem of his fellow citizens, from which all the twistings of radical ingenuity will not be able to eject him. It is of little consequence to the people whether Mr. CRAWFORD can reach any degree of talent applicable to his opponents—the question is, has he done so? We cannot endure to go over the beaten ground, which has long been completely in public view, but it can be fearlessly answered, he has not!

"Then," will the Enquirer ask, "why has he been continued in office by Mr. MONROE, in despite of the want of abilities? It is pretty well understood that it cannot be from partiality." We think so too, for we believe our present Chief Magistrate never made an appointment from personal bias.—But there is a species of magnanimity in the souls of some men, which others cannot comprehend. We believe Mr. MONROE has no partiality for Mr. CRAWFORD, for we think his public services have not been calculated to create any; but we believe Mr. M. possessed of a large share of that elevation of mind which so distinguished all the fathers of our glorious revolution. Probably the Enquirer will be unwilling to believe this, for in the kind of magnanimity to which we allude, the Radicals do not seem to be very conversant. "There seems," says he, "to be the utmost confidence in Mr. MONROE, why then does he retain so unskilful a financier?" The writer here utters, not a positive assertion against Mr. M.'s popularity, but a decided innuendo that it is only seems; but weaverser that there is, and that the retention of Mr. CRAWFORD in office, proceeds from the magnanimous structure of Mr. MONROE's mind.

He could not have forgotten that Mr. CRAWFORD was prepared to oppose his elevation to the Presidency in 1816, until Mr. C. found that opposition would be fruitless. After he was elected President of the Republic, not having then an inferior opinion of Mr. C.'s talents, with a magnanimity truly great, he appointed this man to office, and Radical venality was completely silenced. But why did not Mr. MONROE dismiss Mr. CRAWFORD, when he was compelled to withdraw his confidence from him? Perhaps the Enquirer advocate will not believe that the same magnanimity again interfered and swayed Mr. MONROE's mind. Mr. CRAWFORD was notoriously a candidate for the high office which Mr. M. is about leaving, and which he has filled so much to the satisfaction of his fellow citizens. And Mr. M. magnanimously resolved not to bias the public mind in the important choice of a successor, by any act that might imply a preference in his mind, for one candidate more than another. He disjoined to dismiss Mr. C. at his moment of retirement, thereby saying, "this man has opposed me, I have set the mark of dismissal upon him, and he is not worthy of public confidence. He has opposed me in all things, and from personal enmity, I do not wish my fellow citizens to vote for him." Whatever Mr. MONROE thinks, he is resolved that inveteracy itself, shall never attribute individual motives to him, and that in the approaching contest no act of his shall bias public sentiment—the merits of the various candidates are before the people, and he leaves the nation to judge for itself.

After all things are considered, can the forbearance of a Scipio, or the magnanimity of a Parthus rise superior to such a course of conduct?—No!—Go, venerable servant of the Republic, go to the shades of a beloved retirement;—bear with you the vituperation of the envious, it is your highest praise, and the admiration of the virtuous, it is your greatest glory!

The "Fellow Citizen," of the Enquirer is anxious to clear Mr. CRAWFORD of the delinquency! Now, as we understand the term, a gross malversation in office, or applying public money to his private use, we have never heard him accused of, and the warmth of his advocate seems to mean "more than meets the ear," and forcibly recalls to our mind the affair of Indian Agency. It is true, as the Enquirer says, that Mr. CRAWFORD has been acquitted by the highest tribunal of the nation; but the man asso-