

Monday, May 24, 1812.

At twelve o'clock ELBRIDGE GERRY, Esq. the Vice-President of the United States, took his seat.

On calling over the roll it appeared that there were twenty-five members present.

The Vice-President then rose and delivered the following

ADDRESS.

Gentlemen of the senate—

Our fellow-citizens, in the free exercise of their constitutional authority, having been pleased to honor the person addressing you, with this distinguished station, have inferred on him an indispensable obligation to meet their just expectations. To attain this desirable object and to preside over this honorable body in conformity to their magnanimity and dignity, which at all times have been conspicuous, will be his primary pursuit. Whilst the constitution has invested him with Legislative and Executive powers, in cases only that are casual, to the decisions of these it has attached a great responsibility; in anticipating which and his other duties, he has the pleasing prospect of reposing on your liberality and candor. But if in this high and influential branch of the government, such unanimity should prevail as to decide for themselves every question of policy, the example will still increase their lustre and add to his happiness.

It is a subject of cordial congratulation, that the liberties of the people in so great a degree rest on that wisdom and fortitude, which mark the characters of the exalted personage who fills the Supreme Executive, of the dignified members who constitute the National Legislature, and of the eminent officers who direct the Ministerial Departments. Public virtues, emulated by few governments, need no encomiums. Fidelity and integrity, unsubdued by the severest ordeals and pre-empting to public calamities a favorable issue, will be ever held in high estimation; whilst a government, scrupulously faithful to its trust, and measures which merit the highest applause, have a just claim to the public support.

The present epoch is momentous, and leads to observations which would not occur on ordinary occasions.

Our country is again involved in a sanguine conflict, the issue of which, in the estimation of the enemy, is to determine, whether the republican system adopted by the people is imbecile and transient, or whether it has force and duration worthy of the enterprise. That it can never fail whilst they are true to their interests, is beyond doubt. And is it not equally so, that they will never desert the government of their choice, or attach themselves to a foreign domination, from which, under the benign smiles of Divine Providence, they have lately by their own valor emancipated themselves? Can they need arguments to convince them, that in proportion to the purity of republican governments, have ever been the reproaches and efforts for overthrowing them, by imperious sovereigns who once ruled them?

"To divide and to conquer" have long been the objects of the enemy. He has presumed on his own arts; and on impotency in our system of governments; but in both instances he will be convinced of his error. The people and constituted authorities of the several states, those great pillars of our confederate system, numerous as they are and inevitably discordant in some of their interests, have evinced in various ways, a firm determination, to support it. The interior frontier states, where the territorial war commenced and continues, assailed by innumerable and Spartan valor are establishing for themselves immortal honor. Through the extensive wilds of our military operations, some of these as in all wars, have been successful, and others unfortunate. But to whatever causes the latter may be traced, they never can be imputed to those heroic officers or privates of the army or of the militia, who have bravely combated the enemy; and of whom, some have been crowned with laurels, others have submitted to irresistible misfortunes, and many have nobly fallen, enshrined with glory. The Atlantic states have repelled with magnanimity maritime invasions, and have also given proofs of their patriotic ardor, by conquests on the ocean. Their enterprises and victories have been sources of national triumph and renown. Are not our officers and mariners, in all combats, unrivalled by fame? Have they not presented infallible sureties for signaling themselves by great victories? How vain then is the hope of division or conquest? Does the enemy expect, by burning defenceless towns and villages, to promote his views? Such conduct may entice the nation which sanctions it eternal infamy, but can never subdue the elevated souls of our brave fellow-citizens; for even depress the sublime minds of our innocent fair, of the ornaments of our country; who amidst the unnumbered distresses inflicted on them and their tender offspring by a merciless foe, will soar above sympathy, and claim the just tribute of universal admiration and applause.

Whilst the executive, in the full exercise of its authority, is left to test the sincerity of pacific overtures, it is a happy circumstance, that the United States, at all times desirous of an honorable peace, and superintended by an officer whose capacious mind embraces, and whose patriotic fervor will pursue every interest of his country, thus meet with ardor and indispensable war. Is not their power a pledge that they can, and their sacred honor that they will with intrepidity maintain the conflict? They demand justice; and can they relinquish it, without a surrender of their sovereignty?

Great Britain is in collision with her best customers, and once her commercial friends, who had viewed peace as a mutual blessing; and who by their moderation had preserved it, until necessity has pointed to a different line of conduct. They had annually sent to her their productions an specie to a vast amount, had thus employed her mechanics, purchased her manufactures, extended her commerce, and become a great source of her national wealth. Hence her jealous and

persevering opposition to their commercial restraints, representing (in high strains) their great injury to the country; but preserving silence on a most important point, their destructive effects on her own manufactures and commerce.

The United States are now her enemy, and is it not easy to foresee, that if the war should continue, the Canadas will be rendered independent of her; and as friends or allies to the U. S. will no longer be instrumental in exercising an unrelenting and savage warfare against our extensive and defenceless borders? To such inhuman acts, in former times, were the Canadians urged by France in her Albion wars; and by our colonial aid G. B. obtained jurisdiction over them. She in turn has abused this power and has justified the U. S. in their efforts to divest her of it. And is not their energy adequate to the object? Will not this be evident by a view of their effective national and state governments? of their great and increasing resources? of the unconquered minds and formidable numbers of their citizens? of their martial spirit? of their innate attachment to their rights and liberties? and their inflexible determination to preserve them? But if any one still doubts, will he not recollect, that at the commencement of our revolutionary war which terminated against her the united colonies had not a third of their present population, nor arms or military stores for a single campaign, nor an efficient arrangement for warfare; nor specie in their treasuries; nor funds for issuing a paper currency; nor a national government; nor (excepting two instances) state governments; nor the knowledge either of military or of naval tactics? Will he not also recollect, that Great Britain was then in the zenith of her power; that neighboring nations trembled at her nod; that the colonies were under her control; that her crown officers opposed every mean for resisting her; excited amongst the colonial governments, (over which they presided) unfounded jealousies of each other, and embarrassed every measure for their union; that she was loaded with less than a fifth of her present national debt; that she was then at peace with all the world, and that she is now at war with a great part of Europe, as well as with the United States? If Great Britain herself reflects on these things, will she not relinquish her vain attempts to awe the citizens of the United States, by exaggerated statements of her military and naval power—or by delusive views of their unprepared state for a war; of the great expence of it; and of the difficulties they are to encounter, in defence of all that is valuable to men? If, in lieu of fruitless artifices, she will make rational and equitable arrangements, which the government of the United States have been always ready to meet, can there be a doubt that the two nations will be speedily restored to their wonted friendship and commerce?

Your fellow-citizen, with sensations which can more easily be conceived than expressed, perceives that there in the government many of his former friends and compatriots, with whom he has often co-operated in the perilous concerns of his country; and with unfeigned pleasure he will meet the other public functionaries, whose acknowledged abilities and public services in like right claim his consideration and respect. With a sacred regard to the rights of every department and officer of government, and with a respectful deference to their political principles and opinions he has frankly declared his own; for to conceal them at a crisis like this, might have savored too much of a deficiency of candor.

And may that Omnipotent Being, who with infinite wisdom and justice superintends the destinies of nations, confirm the heroic patriotism which has glowed in the breasts of the national rulers, and convince the enemy, that whilst a disposition to peace, on equitable and honorable terms, will ever prevail; their public council, one spirit, animated by the love of country, will inspire every department of the national government.

E. GERRY.

Washington, 22 May 1812.

The usual preparatory orders were the adopted, and the Senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Precisely at twelve o'clock, the late Clerk of the House of Representatives called to order the members of the House of Representatives present in the Hall; and the roll of the members was called over by states, when it appeared 148 members had answered to their names.

A large majority having been thus ascertained to be present,

On motion of Mr. Findley, the House proceeded to the choice of a Speaker by ballot.

Mr. Lewis, Mr. Roberts, and Mr. McKim, the tellers named by the Clerk, having counted the ballots, Mr. Lewis reported, that the votes were as follow:

For Henry Clay, 98,  
Timothy Pitkin, 54,  
Scattering, 5.

It was according declared that Mr. Clay was duly elected, and he was conducted by the tellers to the chair, from which, after having been sworn he addressed the House in an appropriate speech.

The members were then sworn in by states. The house then proceeded to the choice of a clerk; when Patrick Magruder was declared to be chosen, he having 111 votes.

On motion of Mr. Findley, Thomas Claxton was re-appointed Doorkeeper to the House, Thomas Dunn Sergeant at arms, and Benjamin Burch Assistant doorkeeper.

The usual orders were then adopted in respect to furnishing the members with papers, &c.

On motion of Mr. Dawson, a committee was appointed, jointly with a committee of the Senate to wait on the President and inform him that the two Houses were ready to receive any communication he might have to make.

The House adjourned.

Wednesday, May 25.

IN SENATE

No material business done.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

On motion of Mr. Goodwyn, it was resolved

that the Standing Committee on the subject of

[These committees will not be announced until to-morrow.]

On motion of Mr. Dawson, the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Macon in the chair, on the State of the Union, for the purpose of taking into consideration the President's Message.

The following resolutions were moved by Mr. Dawson, and adopted without objection:

Resolved, That so much of the message as relates to the military establishment of the U. S. be referred to a Select Committee.

Resolved, That so much as relates to the naval establishment, be referred to a Select Committee.

Resolved, That so much as relates to the revenue, be referred to the Committee of Ways and Means.

On motion of Mr. Grundy, it was

Resolved, That so much of the Message as relates to foreign affairs, be referred to a Select Committee.

BARBARITIES OF THE ENEMY.

After the adoption of these resolves, Mr. Clay (Speaker) rose and adverted to that part of the message which alludes to the inhumanity of the enemy, expressed his abhorrence of the enormities committed by them, as well in the massacre of our citizens on the Western frontier, as the conflagration of our little towns on the maritime border. The latter outrage had not been pretended to be denied, but had been apologized for (by whom he did not say) on the pretence that our people had first fired on one of their flags. Although he believed the allegation false, he was glad that it was thought necessary to make any apology for it. The facts, however, in both cases ought to be enquired into and distinctly ascertained. If found to be as public report had stated them, they called for the indignation of all Christendom, and they ought to be embodied in an authentic document which might perpetuate them on the page of history. These were substantially the remarks, as written from memory, with which Mr. Clay prefaced the following resolution:

Resolved, That so much of the Message of the President of the U. States as relates to the spirit and manner in which the war has been waged by the enemy, be referred to a Select Committee.

The resolution was adopted without opposition or division.

The committee then rose, and the several resolutions adopted in committee of the whole were agreed to by the House.

After these resolutions were agreed to,

Mr. Grosvenor moved to reconsider the resolution moved in committee by the Speaker, for the purpose of amending it. Quoting the message of the President, he said that the barbarity of the enemy was therein contrasted with the humanity which had characterized the war on our part. He wished to see the evidence on this head also, and therefore was desirous of amending the resolution, if considered, by adding, after the words "by the enemy," the words "and by this nation."

Mr. Deha suggested the propriety of recommending the subject to the committee of the whole on the state of the Union, that the mover of this resolve (Mr. Speaker Clay) might have an opportunity of speaking to it, if reconsidered.

Mr. Grosvenor said he had not the slightest objection to this course. He also intimated a disposition to withdraw the motion he had made; but

Mr. Wright took the floor. He was opposed to the proposed re-consideration, principally because he thought the amendment suggested would cast a reflection, by insinuation, on the conduct of our officers. He was not disposed at this moment to give his sanction to a procedure which would be a libel on our land and naval officers, who had distinguished themselves during the war as much by their humanity as by their valor. The same pen which recorded the great exploits of our Navy, would record the humanity along with the bravery of its officers. [The Speaker here apprised Mr. W. that he had misunderstood the gentleman from New York; if he had supposed him to have cast any imputation on the conduct of our officers.] Mr. W. then said he wished to know, that he might act understandingly, whether it was intended to insinuate or suggest that there had been any impropriety of conduct on our part; or whether, in referring the subject to a committee, it was intended to state any facts or shew any cause in support of that reference. He hoped the resolve would not be reconsidered; although, if there were the slightest ground for such a course, he should not hesitate to institute an enquiry into the conduct of any individual who should have dared to violate the usages of war so sacredly observed by the government and our people in general.

Mr. Grosvenor said he had merely wished, as the object of the honorable Speaker had been avowed on making his motion to be the obtaining of an historical document to perpetuate the barbarity of the enemy; and as in the message that barbarity had been contrasted with our humanity, that the facts on the one hand should accompany those on the other. He should hope, he said, that the call for such a paper would be far from presenting a libel on our officers as the gentleman from Maryland seemed to suppose Mr. G. was not however solicitous about the fate of his motion, for which he said he felt but little anxiety.

The question for re-consideration was then taken, and lost.

For re-consideration 62

Against it 74

The house then proceeded to ballot for a chaplain. The Rev. Jesse Lee was chosen.

At 4 the house adjourned.

Thursday, May 27.

Mr. Gibson presented the petition of John Taliaferro, contesting the election of John P. Hungerford, now sitting as a member from Virginia; and

Mr. Elphes presented the petition of Burwell Bassett, contesting the election of Thomas Bayley, now sitting as a member from Virginia.

These petitions were read and referred to a committee of elections.

Mr. Jennings presented the memorial of the Legislative Council and House of Representatives of Indiana territory, stating that from the bad situation of that territory, the ordinary operations of the people have been interrupted, and people disabled from making payments for public lands they have purchased, and prayed that further time may be allowed therefore to the committee of Public Lands.

No business being before the House, an adjournment took place.

COMMITTEES APPOINTED YESTERDAY.

Committee of Elections. Messrs. Fisk, of Vermont, Burwell, Davenport, Anderson, Cady, Avery, and Pickering.

Committee of Ways and Means. Messrs. Bibb, Pleasants, Roberts, Pitkin, Gourdin, Montgomery

Committee of Claims. Messrs. Archer, Broom, Mosley, Sage, Sanford, Goodwin, and Caldwell.

Committee of Commerce and Manufactures. Messrs. Newton, McKim, W. Reed, Benson, Sargent, Parker, and Telfair.

Committee on the Public Lands. Messrs. McKee, Robertson, Breckenridge, Bigelow, Mason, King of N. C. and Conard.

Committee for the District of Columbia. Messrs. Dawson, Kent, Lewis, Pearson, Ringgold, Governor, and Brown.

Committee on the Post Office and Post Roads. Messrs. Rhea, of Ten. Lyle, Franklin, Jackson, R. I. Bradley, and Sharp.

Committee of Royal and Unfinished business. Messrs. Alston, Ely, and Roane.

Committee of Accounts. Messrs. Pickens, Mendenhall, and Winter.

Committee of Enrolment. Mr. Crawford and Mr. Bayly.

Committee of Foreign Affairs. Messrs. Callaghan, Grundy, Desha, Jackson, of Virginia, Luger, Fisk of New-York, and Webster.

Committee of Military Establishment. Messrs. Troup, Sevier, Wright, Searcy, Taylor, Talmadge, and Tannehill.

On Naval Affairs. Messrs. Nelson, Walcott, Massachusetts, Alston, Stockton, Skinner, Deane and Post.

On the spirit and manner in which the war has been waged by the enemy. Messrs. Macon, Fiske, Wright, Gaston, Clark, Humphreys, and Cooper.

IN SENATE.

Wednesday, May 26.

The President laid before the Senate a report of the Secretary for the Department of War, comprehending statements of all the treaties held with the Indian tribes respectively, since the 4th March 1798, relative to the purchase of lands, the amount of purchases and amount with the amount in goods and money expended in carrying such treaties into effect; and transmitting to a resolution of the Senate of the 30th December 1812, and the report was read.

Thursday, May 27.

Mr. Smith and Mr. Goldsborough, of Maryland, and Mr. German, of New-York, appeared and took their seats.

On motion of Mr. Campbell, it was resolved that so much of the President's Message as relates to our intercourse with foreign powers, be ordered to be referred to a committee of seven consisting of Messrs. Campbell, Taylor, Chiles, Smith, Varnum, Brown, Dana.

That so much as relates to the naval establishment be referred to a committee of five, consisting of Messrs. Smith, Gaillard, Gilman, Howell and Cutts; and

That so much as relates to the military establishment, be referred to a committee of five; consisting of Messrs. Anderson, Varnum, Smith, Lee and Hunter.

Friday, May 28 1812.

No material business was done.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Several other members appeared, were qualified, and took their seats.

Two or three petitions of a private nature were presented and referred.

No business offering itself for consideration the House adjourned to Monday.

Foreign.

From the New York National Advocate.

FROM FRANCE.

By the Delisle, arrived at this port on Monday, we have received files of French papers, in which we do not perceive any thing very important except the following article, which we translate:

PARIS, March 23.

This day his majesty the emperor and king, being seated upon his throne, surrounded with the princes grand dignitaries, the ministers, the great officers of the empire, the grand officers of the legion of honor, the members of the senate, and those of the council of state, received a deputation from the legislative body.

This deputation was presented to his majesty by his serene highness the prince of Benevento (Talleyrand) vice grand elector, and his excellency count Montesquieu delivered the following

ADDRESS:

Sire—Your faithful subjects, the deputies from the departments to the Legislative body, have directed us to lay at the foot of the throne the homage of their gratitude and fidelity.

"Whilst important political interests detained your majesty so far from your dominions, you were ever present to their thoughts; by the ties they associated themselves to those noble halls of which their children partook the honor and the perils. On this day, as then, our hearts rejoiced to joy; and it might be said that our triumphs were suspended, only to manifest more clearly the energy of our character, the extent of our resources, and our confidence in your majesty."

"Yes, Sire! the different nations which compose this vast empire, formerly divided by interests and conflicting interests, reunited by honor and fidelity, no longer emulate each other, but by their zeal and attachment to your majesty, repelling every idea of a peace which would