

MINERVA; or, ANTI-JACOBIN.

TWO & A HALF DOLLARS PER ANNUM. Payable in Advance.

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WASHINGTON, October 26.

The House of Representatives have taken off the injunction of secrecy respecting the following proceedings of the last session, and ordered them to be printed.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES Of the United States.

WEDNESDAY, the 12th Jan. 1803.

Ordered, that the Committee of the whole House, to whom was yesterday committed a motion in words following, to wit:

Resolved, That a sum of two millions of dollars, in addition to the provision heretofore made, be appropriated to defray any expences which may be incurred in relation to the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations, to be paid out of any money that may be in the Treasury, not otherwise appropriated, and to be applied under the direction of the President of the United States, who is hereby authorized to borrow the whole or any part thereof; an account whereof, as soon as may be, shall be laid before Congress;—be discharged from the consideration thereof; and that the said motion be referred to Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Eustis, Mr. Bayard, Mr. Dickson, Mr. Lowndes, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Gregg, that they do examine the matter thereof, & report the same with their opinion thereupon, to the House.

The Committee, to whom was referred a resolution proposing an appropriation of two millions of dollars, in addition to the sum usually appropriated for the purposes of intercourse between the United States and foreign nations, submit the following

—REPORT.—

The object of this resolution is to enable the executive to commence, with more effect, a negotiation with the French and Spanish governments relative to the purchase from them of the island of New-Orleans, and the provinces of East and West Florida. This object is deemed highly important and has received the attentive consideration of the Committee. The free and unimpeded navigation of the river Mississippi, is a point to which the attention of the general government has been directed, ever since the peace of 1783, by which our independence as a nation was finally acknowledged. The immense tract of country owned by the United States, which lies immediately on the Mississippi, or communicates with it by means of large navigable rivers rising within our boundaries, renders its free navigation an object, not only of inestimable advantage, but of the very first necessity. The Mississippi forms the western boundary of the United States from its source to the 31st degree of north latitude, and empties itself into the Gulf of Mexico about the 29th degree of north latitude. It furnishes the only outlet thro' which the produce of the Indiana Territory, of the States of Ohio, Kentucky and Tennessee, and of the western parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia, and a portion of the Mississippi Territory, can be transported to a foreign market or to the ports of the Atlantic States. From the 31st degree of north latitude which is the southern boundary of the United States, to the mouth of the river, the Territory on each side has heretofore been in possession of the Spanish government; the province of Louisiana lying to the west, and those of East Florida, with the island of New-Orleans, to the east. Although the United States have insisted on an uncontrollable right to pass up and down the river, from its source to the sea, yet this right, if admitted in its most ample latitude, will not secure to them the full advantages of navigation. The strength and rapidity of the current of the Mississippi are known to render its ascent to extremely difficult, that few vessels of burthen have attempted to go as far as our boundary. This circumstance obliges the citizens of the western country to carry their produce down the river in boats, from which it is put on board of ships capable of sustaining a sea voyage. It follows, therefore, that to enjoy the full benefits of navigation, some place should be fixed which sea vessels can approach without great inconvenience, where the American produce may be deposited until it is again shipped to be car-

ried abroad. This great point was secured to us in the year 1795 by the Spanish government, who agreed in the treaty of San Lorenzo el Real, that Americans should have the right of deposit at New-Orleans. This right has been used from that time till a late period; but the conduct of the Intendant at that place, shews how liable the advantageous navigation of the river is to interruption, & it strongly points out the impolicy of relying on a foreign nation for benefits which our citizens have a right to expect should be secured to them by their own government. It is hoped that the port of New-Orleans may again be opened, before any very material injuries arise; but should this be the case, or if as the treaty provides, a new place of deposit should be assigned, the late occurrence shews the uncertainty of its continuance. Experience proves that the caprice or the interested views of a single officer, may perpetually subject us to the alternative of submitting to injury, or of resorting to war.

The late violation of our treaty with Spain necessarily leads to the enquiry how far the western country may be affected in other points, not connected with New-Orleans. The Mississippi Territory extends from the confines of Georgia to the river Mississippi, and from the 31st to the 35th degree of north latitude. It is estimated to contain more than fifty millions of acres, and from its numerous advantages must one day or other possess an immense population. The variety, richness and abundance of its productions, hold out to settlers the strongest inducements to resort thither, and the U. States may safely calculate on drawing a considerable revenue from the sale of lands in this, as well as in other quarters of the western country. The value of these, however, may be diminished or increased, and the sale impeded or advanced by the impression made on the public mind, by shutting the port of New-Orleans, and by eventual measures which may be adopted to guard against similar injuries.

West Florida is bounded on the North by the Mississippi Territory, from which it is separated by no natural boundary; on the east by the river Apalachicola which divides it from East Florida; on the west by the river Mississippi, and on the south by the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi Territory is intersected by many large and valuable rivers which rise within its own boundaries, and meander through it in a general direction from north to south, but empty themselves into the Gulf of Mexico through the province of West Florida. In fact with the exception of that part of the territory which lies immediately on the Mississippi, the whole must depend on the Mobile and the Apalachicola, with their numerous branches, and on some other rivers of inferior note, for the means of sending its produce to market, and of returning to itself such foreign supplies, as the necessities or convenience of its inhabitants may require. In these rivers the eastern parts of the State of Tennessee are deeply interested, as some of the great branches of the Mobile approach very near to some of those branches of the Tennessee river, which lie above the great Muscle shoals. Even if it should prove difficult to connect them, yet the land carriage will be shorter, & the route to the sea more direct, than the river Tennessee furnishes. These rivers possess likewise an advantage which is denied to the Mississippi. As their sources are not in the mountains, and their course is through a level country, their currents are gentle and the tide flows considerably above our boundary. This circumstance together with the depth of water which many of them afford, render them accessible to sea vessels; and ships of two hundred tons burthen may ascend for several hundred miles into the heart of the Mississippi territory. These rivers, however, which run almost exclusively within our own limits, and which it would seem as if nature had intended for our own benefit, we must be indebted to others for the beneficial use of, so long as the province of West Florida shall continue in the possession of a foreign nation. If the province of West Florida were of itself an independent empire, it would be the interest of its government to pro-

mote the freedom of trade, by laying open the mouths of the rivers to all nations, this having been the policy of those powers who possess the mouths of the Rhine, the Danube and Po and the Tagus, with some others. But the system of colonization, which has always heretofore prevailed, proves, that the mother country is ever anxious to engross to itself the trade of its colonies, and affords us every reason to apprehend that Spain will not readily admit us to pass through her territory to carry on a trade either with each other or with foreign nations. This right we may insist on, and perhaps it may be conceded to us; but it is possible that it may be denied. At all events it may prove the source of endless disagreement and perpetual hostility.

In this respect East Florida may not perhaps be so important, but its acquisition is nevertheless deemed desirable. The connection with the State of Georgia at the river St. Mary's it stretches nearly four hundred miles into the sea, forming a large peninsula, and has some very fine harbors. The southern point, Cape Florida, is not more than one hundred miles distant from the Savannah, and the possession of it may be beneficial to us in relation to our trade with the West India. It would likewise make our whole territory compact, would add considerably to our sea coast, and by giving us the Gulf of Mexico for our southern boundary, would render us less liable to attack, in what is now deemed the most vulnerable part of the Union.

From the foregoing view of facts, it must be seen that the possession of New-Orleans and the Floridas will not only be required for the convenience of the United States, but will be demanded by their most impious necessities. The Mississippi and its branches, with those other rivers above referred to, drain an extent of country not less perhaps than one half of our whole territory, containing at this time one eighth of our population and progressing with a rapidity beyond the experience of any former time, or of any other nation. The Floridas and New-Orleans command the only outlets to the sea, and our best interests require that we should get possession of them. This acquisition, however, arises not from a disposition to increase our territory;—for neither the Floridas nor New-Orleans, offer any other inducements than their mere geographical relation to the United States. But if we look forward to the free use of the Mississippi, the Mobile, the Apalachicola and the other rivers of the west, by ourselves and our posterity, New-Orleans and the Floridas must become a part of the United States either by purchase or by conquest.

The great question then which presents itself is, shall we at this time lay the foundation for future peace, by offering a fair & equivalent consideration; or shall we hereafter incur the hazards and the horrors of war?—The government of the United States is differently organized from any other in the world. Its object is the happiness of man: its policy and its interest, to pursue right by right means. War is the great scourge of the human race, and should never be resorted to but in cases of the most imperious necessity. A wise government will avoid it, when its views can be attained by peaceful measures. Princes fight for glory, and the blood and treasure of their subjects is the price they pay. In all nations, the people bear the burthen of war, and in the United States, the people rule. Their representatives are the guardians of their rights, and it is the duty of those representatives to provide against any event, which may, even at a distant day, involve the interests and the happiness of the nation. We may indeed have our rights restored to us by treaty, but there is a want of fortitude in applying temporary remedies to permanent evils; thereby imposing on our posterity a burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. If the purchase can be made, we ought not to hesitate. If the attempt should fail, we shall have discharged an important duty. War may be the result; but the American nation, satisfied with our conduct, will be animated by one soul, and will unite

all its energies in the contest. Foreign powers will be convinced that it is no a war of aggrandisement on our part, and will therefore feel no unreasonable jealousies towards us. We shall have proved that our object was justice; it will be seen that our propositions were fair; & it will be acknowledged that our cause is honorable. Should advances be necessarily they may be advantageously formed. We shall have merited and shall therefore possess general confidence. Our measures will stand justified not only to ourselves and our country, but to the world.

In another point of view perhaps, it would be preferable to make the purchase, as it is believed that a smaller sum would be required for this object, than would necessarily be expended, if we should attempt to take possession by force; the expences of a war being indeed almost incalculable. The committee have no information before them, to ascertain the amount for which the purchase can be made, but it is hoped, that with the assistance of two millions of dollars in hand, this will not be unreasonable. A similar course was pursued for the purpose of settling our differences with the regency of Algiers, by an appropriation of one million of dollars prior to the commencement of the negotiation, and we have since experienced its beneficial effects.

Under these impressions therefore the committee recommend the adoption of the resolution referred to them in the following words, viz.

Resolved, That a sum of two millions of dollars in addition to the provision heretofore made be appropriated to defray any expences which may be incurred in relation to the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations; to be paid out of any money that may be in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, and to be applied under the direction of the President of the United States; who if necessary is hereby authorized to borrow the same or any part thereof, on account whereof, as soon as may be, shall be laid before Congress.

List of Letters,

Remaining on hand at the Post Office Fayetteville, 1803; which if not called for within three months, will be sent to the General Post Office as dead Letters.

1. HUGH-Brown, Rowson county; Lewis Brown, Fayetteville; Peter Buchan, Rowson county; Thomas Byrd, Fayetteville; John Pine, Rowson county; George K. Brown, Fayetteville.
2. John Clark, Fayetteville.
3. Edward Deane, Fayetteville; Levi Douglas, or James Crawford, ditto; Thomas Davis, ditto.
4. John Freeman, Fayetteville.
5. Donald Graham, Silver Run; Mary Gates, Fayetteville.
6. Edward James, Esq. Fayetteville; Rev. James Jordan, Cumberland county.
7. Richard King, Fayetteville.
8. Alexander Leach, Cumberland county; John Lord, Fayetteville, 2; Rev. Colin Lindley, ditto.
9. Donald McLean, Fayetteville; Mary McMillan, Fayetteville; Mr. Morison, Taylor, Cumberland county; Elizabeth Mitchell, Fayetteville; Melan McNeil, Fork River; John McTeer, Rowson county; William McGee, Cumberland county; Archibald M'Dougald, Richmond county; Miss Margaret M'Donald, at Cape Annes M'Donald's; John or Daniel McKay, care of Alexander or Edward Love, Rowson county; Mr. M'Kinis, Rowson county; Miss Nancy M'Milan, Fayetteville; John M'Pherson, Cumberland county; Elizabeth Moore, Fayetteville; Solomon M'Coll, Rowson county; Duncan M'Callum, Moore county; James M'Alister, near Fayetteville, 2; Daniel M'Corquodale, Cumberland county.
10. George Nutting, Fayetteville.
11. William Pittman, near Fayetteville; Thomas Payton, near ditto, 4; Hugh Porter, jun. (Preacher,) ditto.
12. Duncan Ray, Cumberland county; William Renshaw, Cumberland county; Catharine Ray, Fayetteville; John Rosser, near Fayetteville.
13. Francis Shackelford, Fayetteville; Stephen Shepperd, ditto; Robert Scott, ditto; James Simlic, ditto; John Sinclair, Moore co. John Sloan, care John Eccles, Fayetteville, 2.
14. John Tarbe, Fayetteville; James Turberville, ditto.
15. Annai Williams, Fayetteville, 3; Leabod Wood, ditto, 3.

DUNCAN M'RAE, P. M.