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**TERMS.**  
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**PUBLIC LANDS.**  
**Dr. Henderson's Circular.**

**FELLOW CITIZENS:**—The period has  
arrived when your thoughts are  
naturally recurring to those individ-  
uals from whom a choice is to be made  
to represent your interests in the next  
General Assembly. Having had, by  
your kindness, a seat in the last ses-  
sion, and having taken some share in  
those matters which claim its earnest  
attention, I deem it my duty, even at  
this late period, to address you on a  
subject which will, sooner or later, be  
of vital importance to the State of  
North Carolina, and to the Union at  
large; and, while entering upon a task  
not pleasing as it is important, I beg  
to assure you that a strong sense of  
the increasing character of the subject  
has induced me to retain any  
presentation of it until the late  
convention Elections should have  
passed away—when the public mind,  
engaged from other interests,  
might view its details and determine  
its value.

The movement of our Legislature  
during the last session upon the ques-  
tion of the *Public Lands*—the subse-  
quent newspaper remarks—the late  
remarks of the Members of Congress,  
drawing the attention of the people to  
this subject—the earnest debates upon  
this subject presented to that  
body, concerning the future disposition  
of these lands—and withal the claims  
recently set on foot by the new States  
all the public domain within their  
respective borders—the resistance to  
the claims by some of the old States  
whom it originally belonged, are in  
themselves sufficient evidence to you  
of the subject is becoming one of  
great and enduring interest to the  
whole body of American People. To  
draw your attention then to this ques-  
tion, in which North Carolina has an  
interest involved, and to give you  
a clear understanding as to the  
rights, and the facts upon which  
these rights are grounded, it becomes  
necessary to travel back into history.

In the beginning of that long and  
arduous war, by which we were sepa-  
rated from the British crown and be-  
came an independent people, the  
boundary lines of some of the old  
States were widely different, and  
not larger than they are at present.  
Virginia, besides her own soil, claimed  
that extent of country at present  
occupied by the States of Kentucky, O-  
hio, Indiana, and Illinois. The limits  
of North Carolina extended from the  
Atlantic to the Mississippi river, includ-  
ing the present State of Tennessee; and  
the rights of South Carolina and  
Georgia comprehended that tract of  
country since laid off into the States  
Alabama and Mississippi. Within  
these old States then there were vast  
tracts of unsettled lands, and as the  
struggle for independence progressed,  
a question naturally arose—what  
could be done with these waste lands,  
which the war terminated success-  
fully? Some of the States who had  
little or no vacant territory, con-  
sidered that the war was a common  
act of sacrifice and suffering to all  
States—was waged by united means  
that each State furnished its pro-  
portion of men and money—that life,  
property, all was asked upon  
the issue, and that these lands, if when  
the crowns should thereby be  
considered a common property to be  
disposed of as the wisdom of after  
times might suggest. These claims,  
liberally just in themselves, were re-  
solved to a certain extent by those States  
who possessed the lands, on the score  
that they were strictly entitled to all  
the territory within their chartered  
limits. Dissensions and jealousies  
arose upon such an extent  
at the State of Maryland refused for  
length of time to come into the con-  
federation, and when she finally ac-  
ceded to the Union, it was with an ex-  
plained reservation and understanding as  
to her land rights. To quiet the grow-  
ing discontent, the General Congress,  
in the year 1780, while the war was  
still in progress, earnestly recom-  
mended to the States who held vacant lands,  
to cede to the General Government;  
and as a further inducement, founded  
on mutual interest, it passed the fol-  
lowing resolution:—“Resolved, That  
the unappropriated lands that may be  
ceded or relinquished to the United  
States by any particular State, pursu-  
ant to the recommendation of Congress,  
shall be disposed of for the common  
benefit of the United States.”

Believing then upon the wisdom and  
integrity of Congress, with a public spir-  
it and a generous self-denial—which

I fear has no parallel now-a-days—several States ceded their vacant Western Territory to the General Govern-  
ment, commencing with the State of  
New York in the year 1781; Virginia  
1784; Massachusetts 1785; Connecti-  
cut 1786; South Carolina 1787;  
North Carolina 1789; and Georgia  
1802. In all these various treaties of  
cession there appears to be but one  
general sentiment: “To promote the  
honor and dignity of the United States,  
and to strengthen the Federal Union”—  
(the language of South Carolina)—  
and one condition, namely: that all the  
lands intended to be ceded by virtue  
of these acts to the United States,  
shall be considered a common fund, for  
the use and benefit of the United  
States, North Carolina inclusive,  
according to their respective and  
usual proportion in the general charge  
and expenditure—and shall be faith-  
fully disposed of for that purpose and  
for no other use or purpose whatever.  
This is the language of North Carolina,  
preceded by the following patriot-  
ic declaration:—“Whereas the United  
States in Congress assembled, have  
respectfully and earnestly recom-  
mended to the respective States in the  
Union claiming or owning vacant  
Western Territory, to make cessions  
of part of the same as a further means,  
as well as hastening the extinguish-  
ment of the debts, as of establishing the  
harmony of the United States—and the  
inhabitants of the said Western Ter-  
ritory being also desirous that such  
cession should be made in order to ob-  
tain a more complete protection than  
they have heretofore received: Now  
this State being ever desirous of doing  
ample justice to the public creditors,  
as well as the establishing the harmony  
of the United States, and complying  
with the reasonable desires of her citi-  
zens—Be it enacted by the Gen-  
eral Assembly of the State of North  
Carolina, &c. and goes on empower-  
ing the Senators and Representatives  
of our State in Congress, to cede her  
vacant lands beyond the mountains to  
the General Government. Thus it  
clearly appears that Congress was  
made, by virtue of the several deeds  
of cession, a Trustee over a vast pub-  
lic interest, and become solemnly  
bound to hold and dispose of them in  
no other way than under the condi-  
tions expressed by treaty with the  
States. Any partial distribution then  
of these lands to the Western or any  
other States, without a proportionate  
share to all the States, our own includ-  
ed, any waste or misapplication of this  
fund, or any attempt to divert it from  
the common use and benefit for which  
it was ceded, would be a direct viola-  
tion of the trust confided.

The above mentioned lands were  
acquired from the British Crown by  
the war of the Revolution. The  
Government, in the second place, hold  
a still greater extent of territory by  
the purchase of Louisiana from  
France, in 1803, and of Florida from  
Spain in 1819. The principal and  
interest of the purchase money, amount-  
ing to near thirty millions of  
dollars, was paid out of the Treasury  
of the United States, in which also  
we had our common right and share.  
These lands then came under the  
same provisions as a trust fund for the  
mutual benefit of all the States, and  
Congress has no more right to squan-  
der or sacrifice them, than the lands  
granted to it by the States under  
treaty. All this public domain, in what-  
ever manner acquired, has at different  
times been pledged as security for the  
redemption of the public debt, which  
was mainly enacted by the old Revolu-  
tionary struggle, which gave us exist-  
ence as an Independent Nation, and  
the late war which stamped it with  
additional character.

By the last report of the Secretary  
of the Treasury, the public debt  
would be paid off by January of the  
present year, and the public domain,  
which had been hitherto covered by  
this pledge, was released from all its  
incumbrances. As early as practicable  
after Congress had obtained from  
the States the lands in question, and  
had subdued the Indians into submis-  
sion, that system of surveying and  
selling off was adopted, the advantages  
of which have been fully tested by  
time and experience, and continues  
to the present day. All the lands  
thrown into market, are first run off  
into townships of six miles square.  
These are again divided into sections  
of six hundred and forty acres each,  
and the subdivision continued as low  
as sixteenths of forty acres; thereby  
affording an accommodation to all  
classes of persons, whether rich or  
poor, according to their respective  
means of purchase.

Under a system devised and main-  
tained with such care and deliberation,  
the Western Territory has been pro-  
vided with a rapidity beyond all ex-  
ample, and a vast wilderness has, within  
the memory of man, been converted  
into a number of States, enjoying, in  
common with ourselves, all the bless-  
ings of civil and religious liberty.

I have said “that Congress has in  
trust a vast public interest.” The ex-  
pression has its value, and must be  
calculated. From all the statements  
founded upon Official Reports made to

Congress from time to time, it appears  
that the quantity of vacant and un-  
appropriated lands within the States  
and Territories, is three hundred and  
forty millions of acres; and beyond  
the limits yet belonging to Govern-  
ment, seven hundred and fifty millions,  
making together, one billion and  
ninety millions of acres.

Of this immense territory, about  
one hundred and forty millions of  
acres have been surveyed. And during  
the forty-five years in which the  
“Land Office” has been open, but  
thirty-one millions of acres had been  
sold up to the 30th of September,  
1835, averaging for the year about  
seven hundred thousand acres through-  
out the entire term. At this rate of sale,  
with a hundred and ten millions in  
market, entire generations would rise  
and pass away, before the land which  
is now laid off would be disposed of,  
for it would require 135 years. This  
billion and ninety millions of acres, at  
the lowest price for which the lands  
now sell, (one dollar and a quarter  
per acre,) would amount to the enor-  
mous sum of one billion three hundred  
and sixty millions of dollars. Or as  
some complaint has been made of the  
present price; take it at half, and you  
have then a share in an interest of  
six hundred and eighty millions of  
dollars—an amount nearly six times as  
great as all the bank notes and specie  
in circulation in the United States;  
put together, estimated at one hundred  
and twenty millions of money, and is  
nearly equal to the entire amount of  
all the lands in North Carolina, as-  
sessed at fifty-two millions of dollars,  
under the war taxes of 1815.

Having endeavored to give, in as  
concise a manner as a clear view of  
the subject would permit, a history of  
the acquirement, title, guardianship,  
and valuation of the public domain,  
and its final redemption from its  
pledge as security for the payment of  
the national debt, it remains for me  
to warn you, fellow-citizens, that the  
smooth and uniform method of survey-  
ing and selling off under the direction  
of Congress, if not properly guarded,  
is likely to be disturbed by rival pre-  
tensions from an unexpected quarter;  
and it is a matter of especial wonder  
that there should be any disposition  
to waste or throw away such immense  
resources, or to abolish a system  
fraught with so many advantages to  
our common Union; nevertheless,  
there exists in all governments, no  
matter how well planned or managed,  
a moving body of restless spirits, who  
are too impatient for the slow and  
natural operation of laws, founded  
in a wisdom widely different from  
the hasty impulses and interested  
motives which govern such natures.  
Our own country is not exempt from  
the general rule, and accordingly we  
have seen within the last few years  
various plans and projects set on foot  
concerning the public lands; and the  
pretension most new and singular,  
the one best calculated to defeat the  
intentions of the old States, who ceded  
to Congress these lands under  
trust, for the purposes above men-  
tioned, is the sweeping demand of some  
of the new States for all the territory  
within their respective borders, to the  
entire exclusion of the General  
Government, and to the exclusion of  
all the people of the United States;  
those who live in the new States only  
excepted.

Fellow-citizens, this claim cannot  
be admitted. We have not forgotten  
our original title to these lands, a  
title in common, which up to our  
times had never been disputed, nor  
even considered debatable. We  
have not forgotten a right, sealed by  
the blood of the Revolution, and  
founded in solemn deeds of cession  
before the whole body of American  
people; and upon treaties with foreign  
Powers for land, the price of which  
was paid from the National Treasury.  
We have not forgotten that army  
after army, levied among the old  
States, was sent to defend the infant  
settlements from the merciless scalping-  
knife of the Indians; and when de-  
feated, as they sometimes were,  
the bones of our countrymen were left  
to bleach in the wilderness of the  
West. We have not forgotten that  
the old States, with a majority in Con-  
gress, have, with the kindness of an  
indulgent parent to a child, granted  
to their western brethren every six-  
teenth section of land, amounting to  
eight millions of acres, for public  
schools—more than two millions for  
internal improvements—half a million  
to their colleges—ninety thousand  
acres to benevolent and charitable  
institutions—and twenty-one thousand  
for seats of government; and permit-  
ted them to select these lands out of  
the best, and sell them at their leisure,  
and we have not forgotten that over  
and above all these, Congress allows  
five per cent. upon all moneys paid  
in for public lands, to open their  
rivers, make roads, build bridges and  
otherwise improve the country at  
large. Not content with these dona-  
tions, equal in amount to one-fourth  
of all the lands ever sold by the Gov-  
ernment, they now come forward and  
demand the whole! Can there be any  
surprise as to the cause why we are so

far outstripped in the race of improve-  
ment by the new States, with their  
fertile soils, penetrated every where  
by steamboat rivers, and assisted so  
liberally by the General Government?  
But suppose that Congress should  
take upon itself the power of ceding  
the lands to the new States, it would  
be as unequal in its operation upon  
States who received, as it would  
violate the rights of the old States, who  
trusted them away. Missouri, with  
a population of one hundred and  
forty thousand persons, would ac-  
quire by the cession thirty-eight mil-  
lions of acres of land; and Ohio, with  
a population of more than nine hun-  
dred thousand persons, would only  
receive five millions and half of acres,  
the quantity of land yet unsold with-  
in their respective limits.

And if you divide out to individ-  
uals in these States, a person in Ohio  
would receive only six acres to his  
share, when the State has paid seven-  
teen millions of dollars to the Govern-  
ment for her lands, while an inhabi-  
tant of Missouri would obtain two  
hundred and seventy-two acres, when  
the State had paid not quite four  
millions for her Territory. Again,  
a cession to the States would be in-  
jurious to themselves; all the States,  
as the title now exists, have a com-  
mon interest in that territory which  
has not been surveyed, amounting  
to more than one billion of acres;  
grant the claim, and all their interest  
is narrowed down to soil within their  
own limits. How much better would  
it be for them to suffer the present  
land system to go on, and they retain  
their interest in the countless millions  
of acres in those unsurveyed regions,  
which sooner or later will be founded  
into States, as the settlements ad-  
vance and the wants of the community  
require.

Propositions have again been pre-  
sented to the public, to bring down  
the price so low as just to cover the  
expenses of survey and sale. The de-  
mand for such a reduction must pro-  
ceed from the idea that Government  
asks too high a price for the public  
lands, and thereby retards the growth  
and population of the western Terri-  
tory. To determine whether the pub-  
lic deem the present prices of public  
land fair and equitable, it is only nec-  
essary to turn to the account of the  
land sales from 1827, when they  
amounted to one million one hundred  
and twenty-eight thousand dollars,  
regularly increasing up to the last  
year 1834, when it amounted to five  
millions of dollars, and to the in-  
crease of population in the new States,  
compared to what takes place in the  
old.

From tables accurately made out,  
it appears that the population in the  
seven new States, embracing the pub-  
lic lands, has increased at the rate of  
85 per cent. in the ten running years,  
between 1820 and 1830, while in the  
seventeen other States, containing  
no public domain, the increase has  
only been at the rate of 25 per cent.  
in the same time. States filling up so  
fast with people need not the addition-  
al stimulus of a reduction in the price  
of the public lands. Most of you are  
aware that speculations in lands have  
very much increased of late. Even  
at the present Government prices,  
large tracts are bid off, by companies  
and individuals and sold again to  
emigrants at advanced prices, whereby  
very large fortunes are suddenly re-  
alized. If the spirit of speculation  
be a subject of complaint at present  
by those who are desirous of changing  
their residence, what would it be if the  
price was suddenly cut down to twen-  
ty-five cents per acre. The moneyed  
men in the West and elsewhere, as-  
sisted by the Land officers and sur-  
veyors, would instantly form them-  
selves into companies with immense  
capital, and take up not mere sections  
or townships, but they would cover  
entire districts with their warrants,  
and hold them up until the poor emi-  
grants would be compelled to take  
them at any price that usury might  
dictate.

Finally, a third temptation has been  
thrown to the western appetite to whet  
its desires. It contemplates a cession  
of the lands to the States at a reason-  
able price. I have endeavored to calcu-  
late the price of the public property  
(in the former part of this address; at  
half the present prices.

Suppose the States agree to become  
debtors to the General Government  
for the amount stipulated in a bargain.  
By the rule laid down, the single State  
of Illinois, with one hundred and fifty-  
seven thousand souls, and thirty-one  
millions of acres of public land, would  
become a debtor to the Union in the  
enormous sum of nearly twenty mil-  
lions of money! In case then, with  
this difference of money between the  
parties, the States refused, or was un-  
able to pay, how could the Govern-  
ment proceed to collect the money?  
Go to war, as we had liked to have  
done with France, and march an A-  
merican army against a Free State of  
brothers, because she was unable to  
pay a sum of money? Delinquency on  
the part of the State would be inevita-  
ble, and, if goaded by the General  
Government for payment, or by any

attempt to put the federal laws in  
force, she would at once expunge the  
bargain and debt together, by taking  
up arms and shooting away in prac-  
tical nullification, assisted by every State  
who owed the Government a few mil-  
lions.

It would be far easier for the west-  
ern people, with a temper not pro-  
verbial for smoothness, to cancel the  
bond by *lead*, than by the more pre-  
cious metals, as the lands in stake  
would furnish a liberal abundance of  
such *death-doing coin*. To obviate any  
dangers proceeding from this cause, in  
early time—to defend an interest so-  
lemnly guaranteed to North Carolina  
by the treaty with the General Con-  
gress in 1789—deeply impressed that  
the present land system, devised with  
such skill, and managed with such  
statesmanship, should not be touched  
with hasty or unholly hands—that  
usurping spirits are busily hatching  
designs, in the face of light and justice,  
to enrich themselves and the Western  
States at the expense of the older por-  
tion of the Confederacy—that the best  
method of resistance and redress con-  
sists in a due and constitutional ex-  
pression of the public will by the  
voice of its Legislature, claiming in  
this instance, under the conditions of  
the treaty, a joint division and inter-  
est in the revenue arising from the  
sales of the public lands, no longer  
covered by the incumbrances of secu-  
rity or wanted in the general expen-  
ses of the Government.—Profoundly  
penetrated, I say, then, with the nec-  
essity of such an action at once, I  
brought forward to the notice of the  
Legislature the following resolutions:

**Resolved**, As the opinion of this General  
Assembly, that any act by which the Con-  
gress of the United States shall give the  
public lands to the States in which they  
are situated, or any act by which the min-  
imum price at which these lands are now  
sold shall be reduced, would seriously affect  
the prosperity of the old States, and do  
great injustice to those States by whom they  
were originally ceded to the Confederacy.

**Resolved** further, As the opinion of this  
General Assembly, that the public debt has  
been extinguished, and the object for which  
the cession of the respective portions of the  
public domain by the States which originally  
held them, having thus been accomplished,  
the proceeds thereof, ought to be made a  
fund among the States of the Union, as shall be  
proportioned to the respective sacrifices and  
expenditures incurred by them in support  
of the United States, or at least in proportion  
to their federal population.

**Resolved**, That the Governor be, and he  
is hereby requested to transmit two copies  
of these Resolutions to the Senators and  
Representatives from this State in the Con-  
gress of the United States.

These Resolutions, untailed by a  
single party expression, so plainly laid  
in the right which the State of North  
Carolina has in a share of the public  
domain, did not pass in the House of  
Commons without the utmost resis-  
tance. By a reference to the Journal  
you will find, that every impediment  
which the ingenuity of man could de-  
vise, or sophistry invent, was used to  
clog their passage through the House,  
or fritter away their force. The broad  
banner of party was boldly unfurled  
for their instant destruction; the sig-  
nals were exchanged and the rallying  
points proclaimed; yet they did pass  
after a two days struggle, precisely in  
the shape in which they were present-  
ed to the House—by a vote of 83 to  
32. In the graver body, the Senate,  
they were laid upon the table by a vote  
of 33 to 24. There to remain until  
quickerened into notice again by a new  
exertion in another Legislature. Hav-  
ing had their trial and condemnation  
before the Legislature, the pardon and  
mercy is submitted to the people, upon  
whose shoulders the good or the evil  
of all legislation must finally rest. I am  
aware that some think the Assembly of  
our State has no competent jurisdic-  
tion in the matter; that to Congress, al-  
one belongs the entire subject. Such  
an idea must at once be set aside, by  
the reflection that Congress itself, by  
the very act of request made to the  
States to cede the territory, admitted  
the existence of the power in the  
States, carrying out the acknowledgment  
by holding solemn treaties with  
them, accepting all the terms, condi-  
tions, and reservations made by the  
States; and if this be not satisfactory,  
it is only necessary to turn to the 2d  
clause of the 3d section of the 4th ar-  
ticle in the Constitution of the United  
States, where the matter is set at rest  
in behalf of the States. The power to  
make a treaty implies always power to  
defend, and if North Carolina does  
not take it upon herself to defend her  
own treaty and her cause, who will?  
and now is the time. If she waits  
until the Western States get a major-  
ity in Congress, any attempt then  
will be in vain. There is, beside,  
something more than mere pecuniary  
considerations in this subject; all the  
signs of the times just past bespeak  
the necessity of a closer union; and among  
all the ties which bind us together, the  
public domain, next to the natural  
love of country, holds the highest  
consideration. By appropriating the  
proceeds of the public lands among the  
States, a new and powerful bond of  
affection and interest is created a-  
mong them like that which binds  
brother to brother—while the General  
Government, regarded in the light of

a kind parent, will extend its care and  
distribute its blessings all around.  
And for North Carolina, “the land of  
our sires and the home of our affec-  
tions,” dejected and dispirited as she  
may be, with gloom before and sorrow  
behind—shall no brave blow be struck  
to resist her downward tendency?  
Shall we still pursue that shortsighted  
policy which has peopled the West  
with much of her wealth and her best  
citizens, and do nothing for her better  
interest by closer concert and a wider  
enterprise? Want, benumbing want  
of funds for internal improvement, has  
ever hung over our ancient State like  
a smothering night-mare; yet when it  
may hereafter be mentioned that we  
are too poor to engage in the race of  
improvement with our sister States,  
let it be remembered that we have in  
the public domain an interest which,  
when properly distributed by law,  
would annually throw into our treas-  
ury three hundred thousand dollars.  
This sum judiciously laid out on  
works of general interest, would soon  
cause the “Old North” to raise up her  
drooping head in smiles upon her fine  
climate and soil, teeming with growing  
towns, fertile farms, and a thrifty, con-  
tented people.

It now remains for you, fellow citi-  
zens, to determine the merits of the sub-  
ject. Its mover is before you as a can-  
didate for the Senate, and whatever  
destiny may await him in the election,  
he never can be bound to you in any  
other light than that of a sincere friend  
and well-wisher.

P. HENDERSON.  
Savannah County, July 3, 1835.

**STATE CONVENTION.**  
**DEBATE.**

**Thursday, June 18.**  
The Convention having resolved it-  
self into a committee of the Whole, on  
the Articles reported for the regula-  
tion of the Representation in the Sen-  
ate and House of Commons.

Mr. M<sup>Q</sup> rose and said, he  
should feel himself but poorly qualified  
at any time to require the Convention  
for any degree of patience which it  
might think proper to bestow upon  
such remarks as his sense of duty im-  
pelled him from time to time, to pre-  
sent for its consideration; but the very  
eloquent and impressive speech with  
which it had been just edited and en-  
tertained by the gentleman from Cra-  
ven (Judge Gaston) had well nigh  
caused him to despair of acquiring a  
just portion of its indulgence on the  
present occasion.

But as the subject now under con-  
sideration, said Mr. M<sup>Q</sup>, is one which  
involves consequences which I believe  
to be intimately associated with the  
future prosperity of the State, and with  
the interests of those, of whose feelings  
and wishes I am the humble organ on  
this floor, I will permit no temporary  
disadvantage to stifle the utterance of  
my present convictions.

The Report of the committee has  
recommended 50 as the number of  
members which shall compose the fu-  
ture Senate of the State, and 120 as  
the number which shall constitute the  
future House of Commons. The num-  
ber recommended by the committee for  
the Senate, which is the highest we  
could have adopted, agreeably to the  
charter under which we are now act-  
ing, appeared on the introduction of  
the Report to be almost universally  
acceptable to the Convention, and was  
accordingly acceded to with but little  
disagreement. Now it has been pro-  
posed to strike out 120, the number  
designated for the House of Commons,  
and to insert 100. It appeared to him  
very conclusively, that the highest  
number for the Senate should be fol-  
lowed by the highest number for the  
House of Commons, as a correlative  
term; for, if the representation in the  
Senate be founded on property, and  
that in the Commons on federal num-  
bers, these respective basis should be  
clearly carried out and reflected in the  
organization of the respective branches  
of the Legislature. But if 50 should  
be the number fixed for the Senate as  
a proper index to the wealth and prop-  
erty of the State, and 100 should be  
chosen for the House of Commons,  
instead of 120, then, we are not present-  
ed with a clear reflection of the feder-  
al population of the State, in the  
House of Commons; but with a num-  
ber of members reposing on some in-  
definite basis, the nature of which he  
could not clearly comprehend.

It has been observed, said Mr. M<sup>Q</sup>,  
by an eminent citizen of this country  
(Mr. Webster) on an occasion similar  
to that on which we have been sum-  
moned to act, that in all revisions of  
fundamental systems, the strictest re-  
ference should be made to the ancient  
usages and habits of a people, to the  
end that their feelings might not be  
suddenly diverted from the channel  
in which they have been long accus-  
tomed to flow, and the stability of the  
Government endangered by the loss  
of their affections. For a Govern-  
ment to be durable, must be so con-  
structed as to interest the majority of  
the people in its continuance and pre-  
servation. If it should not, it will  
sooner or later become the victim of  
those popular commotions, which have