Vot. XI.

M. PORTER's SPEECH INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS.

(Concluded from our last.)

There may be so no, sir, whose fears to do any thing which shill dimit ish the parional resources may incline them to telect his system of internal improvem nt, at the first view, on account of the magnitude of its x source. Let me ask there gentlemen to give themselves the gould to trace the consequences of this system on the public wall h. and they

will soon be satisfied that there are no posite means by which the aggregate soluted the lended property of the U. Surrently be so certainly mereased, as he the application of part of the sehad to the purpose of opening the great giand navigation which I have before described. The immediate and necesany effect of which would be ocuhance

the value of the remaining part to an algood used convable extent.

Thave been somewhat conversant with tor i terests of the great private landho-dees of the Western country. I hey are a class all people whose sagacity in escapentic, and industry in pursuing the means of accumulating wealth are range questioned. When they unde take the sale and settlement of wild lasts, there is no policy so well understand or so cenerally a lopted as that of epe angleary and extensive communications, through the dull rept parts of heir lends, and of facilitating the approaches to them, by a ms of good roads. And farively collar they expend in these purs, or, indeed, in almost any other pube in provident, they are sure to be removeraged three or four hundred per Column to the energies d v. lue which is to the ven to these lands.

1. C. States are owners of bour 250 nells us at acres of I not in the Western country, independent of Louisiana; more tron 100,000 one acres in the vicini y of to L kes. The public lands occupy rest on the L. kes I more than 2000 nestin extent, inclusive of the navig ... be streights by which bey are connected-intex lanve of he numerous and extensive Islamis aborne is g, more or less la all of them. Taking 30 miles to a caden along this coase will give at . his mallines of ecres of public land, to most acmore of which is within 50. may a me mayieable waters of the lakes. A same might be effected from the Athave the lakes by an appropriation the employ of acres to that object-And this not by an actual sinking or sacase of the price of the land, but by to ver morel it into can I stock, which to a would, in all probability, be more " which is a branche than the land uself. he effect of opening this navigation with by to enhance the value of the re-In a ty-horty-nine millions, some hun-The value of the land the depend up in the value of its proe ie, a lust as with more precision, the arms which this produce To shew I missel of rese ing this not gation on these profess I will instance the article 0 which which is one of the great stahe armies of the lake country, and is If weld there with greater certainty, and m greater pe feetion, than in any or bet par of the U States. The average f wheat on the lak s all vicens. This depression of price to will solely to the present expences. the effect would be to "he saving in transportation to the of the armie, and wheat would a of the core s. a bushel. But it he latmer from 30 to 40 cents to c a busice of wheat. When, are only from ten to twenty centser as, if he muld sell for one dollar. my s would be from 50 to 70 cents then, of opening this navi claim e from 4 to 600 per cen-The propertion. By taupping it It reduced the value of I ads, is is to effect up to be distributed, if the result, as r spects

sir. the 50,000.000 cf acres on the lakes. For the first year which are now worth \$50,000,000 would immediately become worth 100 000,000 - And thus, besides performing a great and imperious duty, which, as a government, we awe to the people of the Western country, we should by this operation, as mere proprietors of the soil, and in a matter of pecumary speculation, advance the public property 50,000,000 of dollars !

But, sir, there are some gentlemen who are friendly to this system of inernal improvement, but who hink the present time inauspicious to such an und riaking, on account of the reduced

sta e of the Treasury.

Forths objection I would answer, -First, that the means by which it is proposed to carry on these improvements, are not calculated to make any scusible impression on the revenue :-And, secondly, that the bare increase of the sales of land, which would be effected in consequence of undertaking these works would more than supply the drains on the Treasury in constructing them. I do not know that I can demonstrate the truth of this list position to the satisfacttion of the H use; but there is not the shade of a doubt on my mind, but the mere undertaking of a great canal from the Atlan ic to the lakes, under the auspices of the general governm't, would, in a very short time, cause the sale of more land than world be sufficient to ecomplish the whole of the improve ments contemplated in the bili before

The expence of executing the whole of the works enumerated in that bill, is estimated at sixteen midions of dollars. This is not a mere wire domes unate of my own. It has be called need from the best information which the Secretary of the Frastry has been able to collect on this subjectiby a genti-man (Mr.La robe) who, as an experienced as will as settlethe engineer, is could seedly superior to any other in this country. The estimare was intended to be a liberal one, and to snew the materian price which he works would cost. If the U. States were to be interested one half in these works, their subscription would amount to eight militers of dollars. The proposed plan, however, does not contemplate the payment of the principal sum; out of, nor to make it charge, bie upon our ordinary revenue; But it provides, hat when montes shall be wanted to cary on these internal improvements, certancates shall be issued from the Treasury, bearing an interest of six per cent. edecimable eventually out of the proreeds of a particular tract of land, set apart to be sold for that purpose. These certificates may be sold in market, or they may be immediately apple d to the

Suppose, then, that the whole of these; works were to be under oken immediately, and completed within ten years: and suppose, too, that no monies should be received from the sales of the hypothecated lands. The calls on the Treasury would then be,

43,000 Dollars, For the first year, 91,000 144,000 sid. 24-1,000 4:11. 400,000 19:11.

-Which sum of 480,000 d llars is the merest of the whole principal sum of 8 millions. And this, sir, would not be a very large sum, compared to the magnitude of the object, and to the extent of our revenue; especially when it is Salving it to market. It costs | considered that, after one year from in 75 to 100 its, to transport a bushel job's mare, and before the effect of such 61 to Trom the lakes to New-York, an appropriation could be felt, our re- customed to the pleasures and advantathe nearest American maket. I venue will be relieved from the payment of wo misions of dollars, and, af er two that into the wilderness, when they can there can be no doubt but it | years, from the payment of four millions | purchase lands in the vicinity of old settodaye the expense of trans or- of dollars annually, in consequence of thements. Several of the individual "I am 75 and 11 u as I w, at least, it he reductions which will have then taken place in the principal of the national

e verth on the lakes one dollar, i more than 1-3d of these works would he undertaken immediately, and that I nearly all occupied. The state of New hese would be completed before any others are begun. The works, as fast lands. Settlement in that state has ad-There, he se's for 50 cents, his pro- las they shad be completed, will be vanced to its western extremily. The drawing a toll, equal at least, it is pre- same is the case with Pennsylvaniasurned, to the interest of the money they and the whole of the immense emigrarost; & in this way the Treath ; will be a non-from the northers, and middle states scheved from the payment of that the. will be immediately pressing upon the

the vouc of land sught to use a land one year, a greater sum than the in market calculated for this northern ployment by the stagnation of that comrecrest of 1 3d of he principal sum of emigration. The lands on the lakes are merce. ight mit hous of do lars; and in this shot up. We have no lands for sale . The U. States? Wing, I from the sale of land) as follow:

\$ 16,000 2nd. 43,000 311. 80,000 5 160,000 10th.

the highest sum called for in any one

Let us now see what will be the pro-

bable amount of the sale of land, within a given period, to forward the execution

of these improvements.

. The present population of the United States Is estimated at seven and an hall millions. It is well ascertained that our population double, every 25 years; and it certainly is increasing, at this time, in as high a ratio, as at any former period. According to a calculation of Mr. Blodge, (in his statistical tables) something more than one third of the mercasing population of the U. States is constantly migrating to the western country. One third of the in reased population, (or that portion which will migrate) for the next 23 years will amount to two and an half millions,-But supposing that only two millions should emigrate, & that only 1 000,000 of these should settle on the public lands. This population would require 50 milhons of acres, or 50 acres to each per son, which is about the average quanti ity taken by new settlers: and it would bring into the Treasury, in the space of twen y-three years, the enormous sum of \$100,000,000, upon the supposition that the whole of the land should be purchosed at the minimum price, of \$2 and acre. It is probable, however, that it will sell much higher; and, if so, the argregate amount of the sum will be increased in proportion to the increase of

Such a demand for new lands may appear extravaran to those who have not attended to the progressive population and settlement of the United States for the last twenty veers .-A moment's recurrence to a few well known fac's on this subject, will shew that such a demand is not only probable; but that, und so some great national calamity befol us, it is certain. The popolation of the state of New York has considerably more than doubled within the last 20 years. Upwards of fifteen millions of acres in the western part of that state, which 20 years ago formed a dreary and uninhabited wilderness, are now covered by settlements, and compose one of the most flourishing parts of the U. States. Population and settlement have progressed nearly or juite to the same extent in the northern and western parts of the state of Penn--v-vania. That tract of country which now forms the state of Ohio, did not contain 20 years ago, 1,000 inhabitants; and now it has a population of more than purposes for which they shall be issued, 1 2000. The great states of Kennucky and I messee have been almost wholly peo led within the same period; and it is not extravagant to say, that more than one hundred millions of acres have been actually purchased and occupied within the last 20 years in the western

It is true, sir, that the rate at which the public lands are now, and have been for some time past selling, is not such as to warrant the calculation I have made as to future sales; but the causes of these sales being so contracted are obvious. One principle cause, which however will immediately cease to operate, because it is ceasing to be a fact, has been that the public lands were remote from the inhabited parts of the country. Settlements will always be regular and progressive. Peo le, acges of society, do not choose to remove states have held large tracts of wild land, which, being more contiguous to settlements, came of ourse first into market. But it is to be presumed that not But the lands of the individual states. especially to the northward, are now York, for instance has but few new " and be to encrease the profits . Up n this calculation, the Unit public lands. Another reason for the

publiclands arises from the circumstance that you will receive nothing but specie in payment for them. The people who migrate to new countries are, with few exceptions, of the poorer class. They rarely have more than property sufficient to transport their families to their new places of residence; to construct a few temporary accommodations, and to subsist themselves and families until their farms become productive. They then calculate to pay for their farms by the produce of them. But the products of the public lands in their present occluded situation, will not command money, and settlers are therefore deterred from purchasing. If, instead of confining the payments to money, you were to undertake his system of internal improvement, and issue paper to enable you to execute it, and make this p per receivable at the land offices, the additional facilities which this would af ford to paym ats would not only bring back this paper into the Treasury, but large sums of money with it. To shew the effect of such a policy, I need only refer to a comparative view of the sales of public lands during the time when the evidences of the public debt were receiveable in payment for lands, and the sales which have taken place since

The sales in the year 1803 amounted to

193,050 acres.

1807

1808

373.511 acres. In 1504 amounted to do. 619,235 do. In 1505 During the whole of this time me pubtic paper was received in payment -The amount of sales was increasing near 100 per cent, yearly, and would probably have continued to increase in the same ratio to this time, had the same quantity of public debt been kept floar, and had it continued to be receivable at the land offices. But, sir. in Apeil 1806 a law was passed prohibiting

the further receipt of the public debt, in payment for land, and the consequence was that the sales diminished, In 1806 473,217 acres: to

to

to

284,180

195,579

143,409 1809 to The sales thus retrogading in amount, in about the same ratio in which they had before advanced, and this for no other assignable cause than what that

law furnishes. But, sir, the grand, and all important operation by which only you can make extensive and effectual sales of the pub-Le lands, is to open the produce of them o market, and in this way to make them pay for themselves. Do this, and not only settlers, but monied men will become purchasers. There are now thousands, and I may say millions of dollars in the northern states, ready to be invested in the lands on the lakes, the moment a value shall be stamped on them, by the certainty that they will be speedily opened to the navigation of the Atlantic. Let the U. S. and the state of N. York, undertake a canal from the Hurson to the lakes; and, so far from draining your Treasury by the operation, it will give you in five years, I will pledge my reputation on it. an overflowing treasury. There can be no mistake about this business, sir, it is a matter of plain calculation.

The government of the state of N. York have long seen the advantages of such a navigation; and they have been for several years desirous of undertaking this canal. They wait only in the expectation that the general government will aid them in this great work; and would benefit the property of the U.S. to a much greater extent than that of the state of N. York.

The present time, far, in my opinion, from being unprop tious to the undertaking of this measure of internal improvement, is peculiarly fortunate. The great commercial capitals which have. been thrown out of employment by the stagnation of foreign com ance, are improvements by a little attention on the part of government : and if they could be so engaged, they would continue to give support to a vast number of our sailors and other laborers, who have hitherto been employed in the subordinate occupations of commerce, but States would never have to pay, in pancity of sales is, that we have no lands | who have also been thrown out of em-

If I had not already drawn too largely ase, the call on the Treatury would be further north than the south part of the | upon the time of the House, I could supposing that no pids were derived state of Onio, and that is too low a lati- nount out other advantages resulting while you are expending millions yearly tude or most of the northern population. from this system of improvement, not for the encouragement of commerce,

Another impediment to the sales of Hless important than those I have already mentioned I could shew hat it would bring into the treasury, perhaps some millions of dollars yearly, by the increase of duties on imports. The great additional quantities of produ e which would be thrown into market through these roads and canals, would be exchanged for foreign merchandize, which is subject to heavy duties; and from which most of our present revenues are derived. I could shew also, the great advantages which, in a military point of view, would result from these improvements. If the U S, were to be engaged in a war, we are equally vulnerable and equally liable to be assailed, at half a dozen different points, some hundreds and even thousands of miles distant from each other; and it would be impossible to carry on any vigorous military operations, without the aid of good roads and canals to transport over such distances the immense quantities of arms, ammunition and provisions necessary to the supply of a great army. It is sufficient, however, that I suggest these arguments, and they will be properly appreciated by the House.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is one other point of view, in which; although an unpleasant one, I feel it my du y to present this subject to the House; and his regard, not only the means of improving that great source of national wealth, the public lands, to the best advantage; but it involves the practicability of enj ying it at all. The people, who have purchased and settled on your new lands, are already your debtors to the amount of some millions of dollars: and in as far as they are your debtors, they are (to use a phrase perhaps somewhat too harsh) a species of enemy-and we have already seen to what a formidable extent their power and numbers are increasing. It is far from my intention, sir, to cast any injurious imputations on the character of these settler . On the contrary, I kin w that they are not to be distinguished from the great mass of the yeomanry of this country; among whom is to be found most of the real patriotism, as well as the real streng h of the nation. It is on them, that we are to depend for the security and permanence of our Republican I stitutions. It is to them that this government must resort for protection and support, in every great and dangerous crisis-I say, sir, that I am not about to impeach either the honesty of the patriotism of these settlers , it is their interest & their wish to pay their debts, and to discharge all their duties to government as good and faithful citizens. But let me ask you, sir, let me ask any man of comnon observation, who has attended in the least, to the present situation of the western country, how it is possible for these settlers to pay you fifty or an hundred millions of dollars in specie, when they have no other resources than in their agriculture, and when the produce of this agriculture will not bring them money enough to buy their whiskey .-It is impossible, sir, and if you intend to hold those lands, much more if you intend to make them a source of public revenue, you must furnish the means of making them productive, by opening them to market. Every motive of interest and policy unites in urging the government to undertake this system. of internal improvement. It is a subject too vast to be accomplished by individual enterprize. The means of the citizens of the Western country are pethis is certainly a just and reasonable | culiarly inadequate to such an underta-, expectation, inasmuch as the work | king. They cannot construct canals, for the very obvious reason that they are already deeply in debt for their lands, and they must continue so until this great work is executed for them. They will then not only be able to pay you for their lands, but they will remunerate you for the expence of opening canels, by the tells which they, will be able to pay. In the advantages which these out-lets for their produce will give them, now idle, and might be engaged in these | and on which their prosperity must so essentially depend, you will have a pledge for their future attachment and fidelity to your government, and which they will never forfeit. But, sir, if you neglect to avail yourselves of the opportunity, which this system affords, of securing the affections of the western people-if you refuse to extend to them those benefits which their situation so imperiously demands, and which your resources enable you, and your duty enjoins it on you to extend to them. If,