

the constitutionality and policy of the measure. As little noise had been made with respect to this law in the State he had the honour of representing, as in perhaps any part of the Union; yet it certainly occasioned some unbecomingly noisy and illiberal mind even there; and he was convinced the great majority of his constituents would not willingly let it again renewed at the present time. He would venture to go so far as to say that the decision of speech and of the press, though carried even to a certain degree of licentiousness, was in general deemed preferable to any thing of the appearance of restraint on either. Their sense might lead them to acquiesce in, and perhaps even approve of temporary restrictions in the moment of impending danger, but such restrictions even then would be unpopular and disafflicting to their feelings, and excite all their jealousies; nor would they easily reconceive themselves to any thing of the kind in peaceful and common times.

It had been argued that no government depended in much upon public opinion, as our own, and it was consequently necessary to continue these restrictions at all times. A Member of the House of Representatives and Father of the House, he could not, however, believe in this conclusion; during the eight years of the administration of that great man, who bore so conspicuous a part in forming and carrying into execution that great convulsion, as well as during the two first years of the present administration, the government had progressed and prospered, without the aid of any such laws. And if the crisis of the war, the two years since called forth an expedient of this kind, it was now at an end, and he saw no reason why he should not allow things to revert to their ancient channels. He was willing, indeed, to see some more inventions, some mischief even did occasionally arise from the unprincipled and unbridled licentiousness of the press. He had had too much reason to lament the truth of this fact. In the present political state of Society, however, these evils, he was inclined to believe, were far more than counterbalanced by the advantages which we reaped from the entire freedom of speech and of the press. He was content, therefore, to take the good with its concomitant evil. For no nice and delicate were the shades of distinction between the licentiousness of the press and a necessary freedom of discussion, that was upon the whole better principle, in times like the present—when the thing would probably work its own cure—to leave the measures of government and its administration entirely open to the attacks and animadversions, without attempting to restrict the exercise, without attending to the evils of public discussion by even an equal restraint.

Mr. H. begged leave to make one to the observation before he fit down. He was evident to all that a change of men was about to take place. It was equally well known, that those who were about to enter into the administration of the government, had on all occasions declared themselves openly and unequivocally hostile to the principles of this act. It was no doubt honorable in those gentlemen, who had heretofore supported this measure, to show their willingness to continue and submit to it, in a change of circumstances, which might enable their political opponents to turn it against themselves. But with what appearance of consistency with what propriety, when what principle, could these gentlemen, avail themselves of the provisions of this law. To him it appeared impossible, that they could act under it. If renewed then, it would remain a dead letter. How far he had your Statute book with laws, which could not be carried into execution, and would of course answer no end.

Upon the whole—the motion appeared to him ill-timed. The measure, it was admitted on all sides, had occasioned much difference of opinion and considerable uneasiness in the public mind. The fate of things, which originally gave rise to it, was at an end, and there appeared no circumstance, which rendered it peculiarly necessary or expedient to continue the law longer in force. All restrictions of this kind were disafflicting and unbecomingly to the American feeling and to the rights of the citizen. And even, if the law should be continued in our Statute book, it would according to all human probability, not be acted upon. Under these impressions, and in this view of the subject, he proposed, that he would, the present motion had not been made, but, at all events he felt himself bound to give it his negative.

(To be continued.)

NEW-YORK, January 26.

A gentleman who arrived in town yesterday from the eastward informs, that a fire broke out in Providence, R. I. on Tuesday morning, and continued till Wednesday morning, which destroyed between 30 and 40 houses.

PHILADELPHIA, January 28.

Yesterday the Centre Square Engine was put in motion, and the waters of Schuylkill were distributed along the pipes of conduit through the streets of Philadelphia. On this pleasing occasion the Mayor and the members of the two Councils attended at the Centre Square. The water was delivered in considerable quantities—and the whole experiment succeeded to expectation. This is a joyful circumstance to the citizens at large, and must be particularly gratifying to those gentlemen of the Corporation who have, through varied and multiplied difficulties, succeeded in the attainment of an object of the first magnitude, and of an object of the health and convenience of the city.

When the water first issued from the Hydrants, which are placed in various parts of the streets, it was considerably turbid, owing to the filth which had collected in the pipes when they were laid on, and which had never before been washed out. This water soon assumed a limpid appearance; and there can be no doubt but that for drinking and culinary purposes it will be found infinitely preferable to the water of our pumps. A number of country men, who happened to witness this first introduction of the water, gaped with astonishment, at the steady wonder of the world.—They will probably return home to communicate the interesting tidings; and it will be well if they be not dubbed liars, when they come to relate what they saw to their credulous neighbours and friends.

From the Examiner printed at Richmond.

Every day produces new evidence of the great philanthropy, talents and patriotism, of Mr. Jefferson. The letter from that gentleman to his friend in Berkeley which we published in this day's Examiner, does equal honor to his head and his heart; and must convince those who have persecuted him, that he is not an enemy to peace and harmony, but a decided supporter of every principle of representative government, and of liberty.

Few men indeed, who like Mr. Jefferson, had been the objects of eternal slander and reproach, would have manifested as much benevolence and forbearance towards their enemies, as he has done in this letter, which I value the more, because it contains the spontaneous effusions of his heart. It was written in answer to a letter, and falls far for the satisfaction of his friends, than it does for the gratification of his enemies. It is a copy of this letter, which I wish to make public.

Copy of Mr. Jefferson's Letter, in reply to one addressed to him, by a citizen of Berkeley.

Monticello, September 4, 1800.

Sir,
Your favor of August 26th, has been duly received, and is entitled to my thanks for the personal considerations you have attached to express in it. How far the measure proposed might have a decided effect, you can best judge; however, in the great exercise of right in which the citizens of America are about to act, I have no mature considerations, fears, that I will do my duty to be passive. The interests which they have at stake are entitled to their whole attention, unobscured by personal or local considerations; and I have no doubt from the presumption of considering myself equal to the vital duties of the first magistracy of this country. That there should be differences of opinion among our fellow-citizens, is to be expected. My own, who think freely, and have the right of expressing their thoughts, will differ. It is true that these differences have of late been artificially increased; but they are now again subsiding to their natural level, and all will soon come right, if no acts of violence intervene. The great question which divides our citizens is, whether it is safest that a preponderance of power should be lodged with the monarchial, or the republican branch of our government? Temporary panics may

produce advocates for the former opinion even in this country; but the opinion will be as short lived as the panic, with the great mass of our fellow-citizens. There is one circumstance which will always bring them to rights—a preponderance of the executive over the legislative branch cannot be maintained but by immense patronage, by multiplying offices, making them very lucrative by armies, fleets, &c. which may exist on the side of the patron all those whom he can interest, and all their families and connexions; but these expenses must be paid by the labouring citizen; he cannot long continue therefore, the advocate of opaqueness, which to lay only the least of them, does the labouring citizen to toil and sweat, for useless purposes.

I should be unfaithful to my own feelings were I not to say, that it has been the greatest of all human calamities to me, to be considered by the republican portion of my fellow-citizens as the false depositary of their rights. The first wish of my heart is to feel that I am regarded as to be safe in any hands, and not to depend on the personal disposition of the depository; and I hope this to be predicable as long as the people retain the spirit of freedom. We are, however, all experience has shown, that no forms can keep them free against their own will. But that corrupt false mind must be very dilant in a country where, for ages to come, unexpecting will fill the hearts of those who will reap for themselves what themselves have sown.

Our chief object at present should be, to reconcile the divisions which have been artificially excited, and to restore Society to its wonted harmony. Whenever this shall be done, it will be found, that there are very few real opponents to a government elective at short intervals.

Accept assurances of the respect of, Sir,
Your very humble servant,
T. J. JEFFERSON.

Extract of a letter from Providence, to a gentleman in New-York dated 21st inst.

I cannot describe to you the situation of Providence at this moment—the filthy boulevards and floors have been burnt since you'd look this morning. Among the unfortunate sufferers, are John Gorham, which I have, were consumed, where it first commenced; Samuel Arnold, here; Thomas L. Halley; do; John T. Clark, do; Green K. Barker, do; J. Olney, do; James Peck, do; and many and a large number others in that neighborhood, with all the goods. The streets are filled with furniture and damaged goods, and numbers of families turned out of doors. The fire is still raging; and it is probable already fulfilled, it is computed at \$1,000,000.

WASHINGTON CITY.

MONDAY, February 2, 1801.

The Editor of the National Intelligencer, during the last week, has received 1000 complaints respecting the irregular receipt of papers by his subscribers that he finds himself unable to reply individually to each.

Complying on his part rigidly with the rules of the department and making up his packets in such a way as apparently to deny injury from the most careless neglect of them, he is authorized to say that the failure is solely to be ascribed to the post office department.

Neglect and misconduct appear to occur in the whole extent of the line. The papers are delayed before they reach even Alexandria, Newport, Del. Philadelphia and New-York, all of which are on the main line.

Determined, if possible, to redress an evil of extensive and growing magnitude, he invites in his subscribers (requesting that letters may be put post) which information shall be, as that received has been submitted to the Post Master General.

The federal members of the two houses of Congress gave a dinner on Wednesday last to Oliver Wolcott.

It. Gov. VAN KENSELEER, declines standing a candidate for the Government of New-York at the ensuing Election.

FOR THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

On the Government of the Territory of Columbia.

No. II.

The next feature in the Bill before the House of Representatives, that claims consideration, is the organization of the legislature and the periods for which its members are elected. The House of Representatives is to be composed of members chosen by the voters of the Senate of members chosen for six years. Whatever motions may recommend the adoption of such principles in a system, whose operation is to affect a great extent of country, under the government of distant authorities, as in the case of the new constitution, it is apprehended that no one solid reason can be adduced for the incorporation of such principles into a system, applicable to a small district, and under the government of any distant authority.

The natural partiality of our citizens to their great system of national policy may have unduly suggested the idea of giving the privilege to the Territory of Columbia. But, if it were known that the circumstances in which the U. S. were at the era of the adoption of the Federal Constitution are widely dissimilar from those which the District of Columbia, now is, it is not improbably to be hoped that no attachment to our federal government will cloud our judgments in a decision on a fit system for the latter.

The constitution of the U. S. admits of no different forms of government than the systems of government in the previous and prospective exercise of all powers, existing those which should be connected with nationality and merely territorial purposes.

The District of Columbia is, in truth, a system of laws; but those laws are entire, at the mercy of Congress and the territorial legislature.

On the contrary, the several States under the federal constitution, little was required to be accomplished, but that which had not been within the power of the individual States, and of course had not been by the occupied; and beyond a certain limit, it is not probable that any State, whose inherent checks should prevent the wanton invasion of State rights. Hence the establishment of a Senate, chosen by the States for six years.

On the contrary, in the Territory of Columbia, an immense field of legislation will be opened, that will require the passage of laws that respect, crimes, property, and politics.

Many of these laws must be passed, without their existence the territory cannot prosper.

Now the contemplated Senate, chosen immediately for six years, will be necessary to discuss upon the adoption of measures, ascertained from experience, to be permanent; and however decidedly the general will of the territory may be expressed in favor of any particular measure, if the Senate be not disposed to assent, it will be opposed to it, it cannot be adopted.

In this feature of the plan we again contemplate effects calculated to frustrate the interests of Washington.

The present population of Washington is but a fraction of that of the whole district; and of this small population it has been shown that but a small part will enjoy the elective franchise. So insignificant would be the weight of her presence in an election, that there does not exist a shadow of probability that her own strength would induce her to be a single representative in the legislature. The proposed system establishes a government for three years; a House of Representatives for two years; and a Senate for six years. Each of these departments has a complete control over the other.

Whatever, therefore, is done by the legislature must be the consequence of all the parties existing for six years, and being elected by eight electors, will undoubtedly be influenced by one common friend, and act as one man. From this it will necessarily result their complete ascendancy.

What influence will be exerted by the systems of taxation and all regulations of policy. Washington is a new city, that from the peculiar circumstances attending its situation, requires an immediate and rigid jurisdiction for six years, and being directed to its legitimate ends, be applied to the general objects of the territory, Washington will inevitably languish, the industry and enterprise of her citizens will be nullified, and the health probably exposed to the ravages of infectious disease.

As Georgetown and Alexandria are old and established towns, this will not be the case with them. They require nothing like