WASHINGTON CITY.

MONDAY, February 21, 1803.

Federal detraction has lately been busy with the character of the Post-Master General. As if the malice of party sickened at the great and laudable improvements made by him in the system of the department, it has seiz d with avidity the occasion presented by the late extraordinary weather to charge to the account of his negligence some failures of the mail arising from the extreme badness of the roads and the obstructed passage of the Susquehannah. We mean not to be the apologist of any irregularities of the mail. We know that these irregularities have heretofore existed to an improper degree. We know too that the present head of the department is resolutely bent upon overcoming them. That he will overcome them we have no doubt. And to shew the prompt attention paid to the subjects of so much complaint, we pledge ourselves for the accuracy of this fact; *That as soon as the Post Master general discovered the failure of the Eastern mail, to prevent a recurrence of the evil, he ordered his Agent from Philadelphia to the Susquehannah, to reside there during the winter months, to aid in forcing the Mail over that river.*

A bill has been introduced into the House of Representatives "*For establishing the Government of Columbia.*"

By this bill a territorial legislature is ordained. The first question that presents itself for solution is:

Is the situation of the district of Columbia such as to recommend this measure; and is it the desire of the inhabitants? Unless these two points can be established either by absolute proof, or such as is highly presumptive, the propriety of the measure must remain extremely questionable.

Is then the situation of the district of Columbia such as to recommend this measure?

It is most sincerely believed that it is not; for these, among other reasons:

1. Its population is small, and its means narrow.

These means are at present entirely incommensurate to the indispensable claims that exist, without the superadded expences of a system of government. Every man acquainted with the hist ry of state governments knows what these are.

2. The necessary effect of a territorial legislature will be the premature creation of a system of legislation, in the formation of which but limited talent and small attention will combine, owing to the small population, and the proportionate existence of talent, and owing to the little time it will be in the power of the best citizens to devote to public concerns from their necessary engagements in private pursuits arising from the present peculiar state of the territory—This system of legislation, imperfectly formed, will either give Congress great trouble to undo, or it will operate, from the difficulty of a repeal by the territorial legislature, in the nature of a fundamental system.

3. The inevitable consequence of these circumstances is, as appears from the provisions of the bill, the adoption of a system of government, radically different from any heretofore adopted in the U. States, and leaving unprovided for many of the most important objects of legislation.

4. The incongruous materials of which the district is composed will either defeat the enaction of laws called for by the wants of the inhabitants, or from the dissimilar application and unequal operation of those laws render them insusceptible of execution, or make them so many new grounds of jealousy and discord.

Is it the desire of the inhabitants that such a measure should be adopted?

It is sincerely believed that it is not their desire. There exist no positive data on which to form an unerring opinion on this point. But so far as the mind of the Inhabitants has expressed itself with any degree of regularity, it is indicative of an indisposition to it. The voice of Alexandria has been on two successive years unequivocally pronounced against it; George Town has withheld a co-operation with the Inhabitants of Washington on a recent occasion, when the recommendation of such a measure was contemplated by the latter; and the inhabitants of the City of Washington themselves, considering the policy of the measure as at best equivocal, have only prayed authority from Congress to determine by delegates to a Convention, in the first instance, the expediency of the measure, and if deemed expedient, further authority to form a system of government for themselves, subject to the constitutional control of Congress. Thus it appears that while a large and respectable portion of the Inhabitants has declared their disapprobation, no portion has expressed its approbation.

The subject is truly an interesting one, whether viewed in its relation to the inhabitants of the territory, or in relation to the whole United States. It is possible, though by no means certain, that the immediate adoption of a territorial system of legislation, might extend some benefits to the people which they at present want, while it relieved the national legislature from the *immediate* burthen of governing them. But it is demonstrable that the measure would operate an ultimate injury both to the people, to Congress, and to the union at large.

The people ought not to be satisfied with a territorial legislature under the direct and constant control of the President of the United States, and under the control of Congress whenever they shall see fit to exercise a power despotic because undefined. They will not be satisfied with it. However, as a sugar plumb it may please the infant, the man will claim a stronger aliment. Equal rights, held at the caprice of no man, will only satisfy him. It is in vain then to temporise. *The Constitution must be altered.* This, and this only is the point to the attainment of which patriotism should apply its energies. Every thing else can operate only in the nature of a palliative. It may protract the period of its attainment; but it cannot create a permanent and salutary substitute.

It is on this strong ground principally, that the adoption of a territorial legislature, at this time, ought to be resisted. Its adoption may, and will, in a certain measure, paralise the efforts necessary to our emancipation from our present state of thraldom; and whatever has this tendency, is hostile to our true interests.

If however, notwithstanding the disapprobation of the inhabitants of the territory, and the existence of circumstances render the adoption of a territorial legislature inexpedient, it is to be established by the superior power of Congress, it may be proper to enquire into the soundness of the principal features of the submitted bill.

The right of suffrage is, in every political institution, of the first importance. The bill extends it to all persons who shall have resided twelve months in his electoral division, and have paid taxes within that time. It is submitted whether there are not two defects in this provision, that which requires a residence of twelve months in an electoral division, and that which requires the *actual* payment of taxes. A residence of twelve months in the territory should entitle the resident to the right of suffrage, inasmuch as no reason can be assigned for refusing to extend the right to citizens resident during that period in any one part, or several parts of the territory. The right to vote should also depend not on the *actual* payment of taxes, but on the *liability* to pay them. If there be no tax imposed on any individual, according to this bill, he cannot vote. Is this right? Has such individual incurred any incapacity to discharge the elective franchise, by the omission of an act not of his own but by his representatives. This provision is principally dangerous from investing the legislative body with the power of circumscribing the limits of the right of suffrage. They may accordingly confine it, by their power over taxation, to the possession of real estate, or any other description of taxable property.

Next in importance to the definition and security of the right of suffrage, is the qualification of citizens eligible to office. The bill provides "That no person shall be eligible as a member of either house of the legislature of Columbia, who shall not have been in the quiet possession of an estate of freehold, for three years at least next before his election, or who shall not have been a resident of the territory for at least three years, nor shall any person be eligible to the senate of the said territory, whose freehold estate does not amount to five hundred dollars."

Insuperable objections lie against this provision. According to our most approved political institutions, according to the system of government established for the United States, the right of being elected has been made co-extensive with the right to elect. Why this truly republican principle, from which great good has ensued and no evil, should be abandoned in relation to this territory, where the powers of legislators are so limited compared with the powers of federal or state legislators, is inconceivable. If the principle be correct on a large scale, is it less correct on a small scale, where the danger to be apprehended from an abuse of power is less? Has it not hitherto been established as incontrovertible, that in the regulation of municipal concerns a wider participation is admitted, than in the transaction of more important and general concerns? Why then make this district a solitary exception? There are no good reasons for it, while there are strong reasons against it. This district is almost a new settlement. A large portion, if not the greater, is composed of citizens not resident for three years; of citizens who have settled here since the removal of the government. Shall all these be excluded? If so, there will scarcely remain in some parts of the district individuals from whom to make a select choice. Again, a freehold estate is required; and to be chosen a member of the senate the possession of a freehold amounting to five hundred dollars. This provision is unjust and unequal. There can be no good reason in giving a preference to the individual who embarks his property in the soil, over him who embarks it in commerce or manufactures. Indeed it would be no difficult task to shew that the community is more benefitted by the enterprising industry of the citizen who employs his property in active pursuits, than by the citizen who suffers it to languish in the soil; and it will be apparent that even the value of the latter will greatly depend upon the former. But the true principle is that property should in political institutions confer no superiority.—It constitutes so small a part of that for the protection of which governments are established, and is itself in general so competent to self-protection, that it requires no artificial barriers to defend it. If there be danger between the relations of that class possessed of landed or other visible property, and of that class which possesses neither, the danger is infinitely greater on the side of those whose poverty renders them the subjects of oppression, than on the side of those whose wealth under all circumstances arms them with great power.

(To be Continued.)

The election of *John Q. Adams*, as Senator, has been confirmed in the Senate of Massachusetts, by 19 votes out of 26.

Letters from Cape Francois as late as the 2d of February state that place to be in a state of tranquillity.

London Papers to the 2d of January have been received at New-York; by which it appears that though Constantinople has received but slight injury from the earthquake, yet that its effects have been very destructive throughout the Turkish Empire.

It is with pleasure we notice the following remarks of the Palladium, a respectable print published at Frankfort, Kentucky. We believe they speak the sentiments of a vast majority of our Western brethren. Their reliance on the general government will not be misplaced. If to feel an unsurpassed solicitude for their welfare, and a firm conviction of their rights, and to entertain an inflexible purpose to promote the one and maintain the other, be evidences of friendship, then are the present government of the United States the friends of the Western people.

"The attachment which the citizens of the state have long felt to the Union, has often been very undeservedly questioned by political writers in the papers of the Eastern states. When such writers as Coriolanus (who professes to be a republican) can prevail on themselves to give currency to the idea, we think it is high time, publicly to deny, in behalf of our fellow citizens, that any power has, or, in all human probability, will have claims to their affection superior to the general government of the United States. Whatever may be the result of the present dispute with Spain—whatever may be the privations in consequence thereof—or however great the inducements to desert the Union,—the people of this state can never be brought "to enroll themselves as dependant provinces of Louisiana." One sentiment only prevails on this subject, *a perfect reliance on the justice of the federal government, and a determination to support its decision, let it cost what it will.*"

We have received a request from a correspondent to republish from the Washington Federalist the following piece of scurrility and unsuccessful attempt at wit, with the view of exhibiting a specimen of the *paper edited by the Clerk of the Supreme Court of the United States.*

In making this republication we are actuated more by a respect for the judgement of our Correspondent, than from our own conviction of the necessity of the notice. So far from apprehending the least injury from the indecency and virulence of our political opponents, we believe the very instruments, mistakenly used by them as the means of salvation, only serve to plunge them still deeper into an abyss, over which, on the return of sober sense they will invoke, but in vain, oblivion to cast its darkest clouds. Not a day passes without a diminution of their numbers; and wherefore? Because, it every day becomes more and more apparent that, with one uniform end in view, they use every mean of accomplishing it. That end is power—and the means such as their interests or their resentments dictate. Two years since, with federalists it was sedition to impeach the wisdom of executive measures. Now calumny and obscenity, too gross for the ear of delicacy, are the evidences of patriotism that vaunts its own praises, and of talent that boasts its own lustre. Men, who are the loudest in their vociferation of the danger of the country, & in declaring the necessity of concentered strength, are the first to blow the trumpet of discord, and the most anxious to lessen the confidence of the nation in those who administer its concerns. But, little do they seem to realise the folly of their ways! they are doing good, while they meditate evil. In striving to divide, they unite the nation; and they hasten the period when the agitators of the land will stand an insulated monument of the "safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated, where reason is left free to combat it."

From the Washington Federalist.

"13th Feb. George-Town.

"Yesterday the Stage passed by the Capitol, on its way to the City of Baltimore, containing among other passengers, the *Washingtonian recalled*, the *Jeffersonian re-appointed* ambassador, to Spain, to France, to Barataria, and to God knows where else—the *Spes ultima*—the *dernier* hope of our friends on the western side of the Allegany.——When oh! horrible to be related—an omen more direful than the sinister flight of a Crow or a Raven!—they had not proceeded one mile from Stelle's Hotel, when de Vheels of de Stage where stopped—and alas! so miry—so broken—so *treacherous* was the ground, no efforts, which could be made were sufficient to procure either a progressive or retro-gressive movement. It is sacredly believed that neither the President, who now is, nor the Braddock's field Secretary, who once was, had any share in this stoppage of de Vheels of de Stage, whatever any wicked Federalist may wish to suggest. Au contraire, it is verily believed that they so much dread certain intestine commotions and oppugnations, to governmental delays, which may possibly take place ULTRA MONTES, that they would, notwithstanding their principles of economy, have lavished a large portion of Oil upon de Vheels, to have procured an acceleration of their rotation.

"There is much reason to believe this inauspicious event hath been brought about through the vile machinations of the Federalists. If it could be fixed upon the judiciary, never could be a more fortunate opportunity to rid our country of that aristocratical junto—as congress being now in session, might immediately *impeach* them.—Any information tending to establish such a charge will be thankfully received, and as Denniston and Cheetham, when they advertised on an occasion somewhat similar, said, "the utmost *Honor* and *Secrecy* may be relied on."

"* N. B. Luther Martin arrived an hour and a half after the fatal catastrophe, at the very spot where the company, including the ambassador, were cooling their heels under the roof of an open barn! It is submitted to the discriminating sagacity of the sage of Clonmel, who mistook an invitation to gaol, for an invitation to dine with Sir John Shore, and to the logical acumen of Friar Bacon, whether the presence of this Arch Federalist, might not by some retrospective, retroactive influence, have produced that intrusive descension of the sinister laternal Rotatories into the inspissated, adhesive terraqueous substratum, which in so unfortunate a manner, suspended and oppugnated one of the most important measures of our government.

MOMUS.

* Some weeks past, in the Aurora, after having expressed with regret the dissentions, which took place among the Democrats of Maryland, just before the rising of their legislature, the sagacious Editor adds, N. B. Luther Martin was at Annapolis the week before!

COMMUNICATION.

"In consequence of the unfortunate disaster, which happened on Sunday last to the Stage, in which our Ambassador was a passenger, it is expected that the President will send a message to congress recommending to them the establishment of a large and commodious dry dock, in which all the stages may at such seasons be laid up and where, with their wheels raised above the surface of the earth, where they may be in as good a state of preservation as the timbers within the inside of a house.

"It is true, to this plan may be made the trifling objection, that while they are so laid up they will be *useless*—but it is a sufficient answer to say they will also be perfectly '*protected.*'

"It is to be hoped some ingenious artist will favor the President with a drawing of a suitable plan, if for no other reason, that it may be hung up as a counterpart to the elegant design of the dry dock, which, with equal display of philosophical ingenuity, was proposed as the GRAVE of our infant Navy."

LEXINGTON, Feb. 1, 1803.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Natchez to his correspondent in this place, dated Jan. 6, 1803.

"There is a report here that two thousand French troops have landed within a few day.

"The government at New-Orleans, has issued a proclamation prohibiting their citizens from holding any commerce with the people of the United States whatever. The consequences no doubt will be very serious. I have not time to assign what their motive can be for so doing or acting in this most cruel and outrageous manner.—I hope their temerity will meet with a just punishment from our government."

Foreign Intelligence.

NEW-YORK, Feb. 9.

This morning arrived the ship Friends, captain Howell, London, 69 days from Land's end. By the politeness and attention of a gentleman passenger, to whom we particularly make our acknowledgments, we have received London papers and Lloyd's Lists to the 10th of December, inclusive. Our paper of the 10th is the *True Briton.* The principal article it contains is a Debate in Parliament, on the 9th of Dec. on the Resolution for the Naval Establishment. The Right Hon. T. Grenville was opposed to the grant of 60,000 Seamen, particularly on the ground, that the exact situation of the Kingdom had not been laid before the House, nor those reasons for the measure given, with which it had been usual to acquaint Parliament on all former occasions. In the course of his Speech, he intimated his want of confidence in the present administration, and declared his object to be the restoration of Mr. Pitt, to his former high station. The sentiments of Lord Grenville, on this subject, are contained in the following paragraph:

"Mr. Sheridan boasted that he had discovered the secret of those with whom he, (Mr. Grenville) acted, which was to turn out the Minister. The discovery, however, came rather late, as all their Speeches shewed them to have had that object at heart. It was also said, that they wished to bring back Mr. Pitt.—He hoped he should not be thought speaking with too great partiality for that Statesman, when he said, that were the Country canvassed through, 99 persons out of a 100, would confess, that to his talents, his integrity, and his commanding genius was due the Salvation of the country. The same 99 out of 100 would also hail his return to power as the best security they could have, and the greatest alleviation of their fears. He was sorry that insinuations had been been made, that he and his friends were desirous of coming in with Mr. Pitt.—He never heard the charge openly made, but if it were possible that any could be base enough to make such an assertion as that their conduct was influenced by sordid views of emolument, he was sure the foul charge would be confined to the base lips that could give it utterance.—If Mr. Pitt should be restored to power, as he sincerely hoped he would soon be, it would then be seen, whether they would stand in the way of any proposed arrangement, or bargain for themselves, or oppose any embarrassments to Government. After entering pretty largely into the defence and praise of many parts of the late Minister's conduct, he said, as for his own, it was before the Public, and he had not the least fear of abiding their judgement."

Lord Hawkesbury supported the resolution. He stated, that the right hon. gentleman had commenced his speech with the same attack that had frequently been made upon the King's ministers, and which had been answered as often as it had been advanced, viz: That they had not brought the situation of the country fully before the house; and that Parliament were called upon without sufficient ground to vote the naval and military establishments of the year. He contended on the other hand, that every part of the conduct of government had fully explained the system which the administration had adopted, as far as has been usual with regard to foreign affairs.

FOR SALE,

AN ELEGANT LIGHT COACH,

ENTIRELY New, Damson colour, and finished in the best manner with plated mouldings, Harness and other corresponding patings. The price will be moderate, which with other particulars may be known by applying to PETER HUMRUKHAUSEN, Coach Maker in Hagers Town, or to the Subscriber at the Capitol hill.

DANIEL HEISTER.

N. B. This carriage, and a good second hand Coachee, will be brought to this City the first of March next.

Feb 18. 3t.

NOTICE.

Will be sold, on the premises, to the highest bidder, for cash, on Thursday the third day of March next, at 11 o'clock, A. M.—

A Lot of Ground in the City of Washington on Square numbered 930, fronting 15 feet on G street, and 50 feet on 9th street, each being a little east of the Marine Barracks.

This lot is offered for sale to satisfy a debt due to me by HENRY DUNLAP of George-Town. The title is endisputable.

ALEXANDER M'CORMICK.

Feb. 18th 180- tf.

WANTS EMPLOYMENT.

AN ENGLISHMAN just arrived (with a Wife and one Child) wants employment.

HE understands farming and butchering, and his wife understands the management of a dairy—they have no objection to go to any part of America that is healthy.—Apply to JOHN GARDINER.

Feb. 14. 3t.