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ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS.

A SKETCH *of the* POLITICAL STATE *of* AMERICA.

NUMBER V.

BUT once more alarmed by a sense of common danger, the citizens of America were led, in spite of a supposed competition of interests, seriously to reflect on those causes, which had reduced their country to such an unfortunate situation, and to seek a remedy for those evils, which were daily increasing upon her—the necessity of a due commercial system throughout the United States, appeared to be the prevailing sentiment, both as intimately connected with raising a revenue for the support of government, as to give a spring to Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce: To effect this purpose, a special deputation from the several States, convened at Annapolis in Sept. 1786; but upon a mature investigation of their powers, they were found to be altogether inadequate, to either the express or implied object of their mission—and it was by them wisely judged, that a radical cure, rather than a partial remedy, was necessary to the future happiness and prosperity of their country, and in order to effect this laudable plan, they recommended a General Convention from the States, at some future period, who, while they were deeply impressed with causes of our national disease, should be instructed to provide an efficacious remedy. Their recommendations were readily complied with, as proceeding from the best of motives, and the reason of them was already anticipated by the conviction, in every persons mind, of their necessity—and a Convocation of the first Worthies and Patriots of America, was held in May, 1787, at Phidelphia—directed to make such additions to the system of Confederation, as were necessary to relieve America from those embarrassments, which had resulted from a weak and inefficient form of government; but upon a candid discussion of the whole plan of their business, and what was expected from the result of their deliberations, it was thought to be dangerous to the future liberties of their country, to vest those powers which ought to be vested in all governments, to answer the end of their institution, to one, constituted as the existing Confederation—Congress being but a diplomatic body, and not under those checks and restraints, which might be made to arise from a plan differently constructed; and although a delicacy of sentiment, arising from a fear of exceeding the limits of their commission, produced some objections to a radical alteration of the confederated system, yet as the salvation of their country was thought to depend upon it—they determined to recur to first principles, and present, for the approbation of their fellow-citizens, such a plan of future government as would answer the great objects of society; and a spirit of mutual concession and compromise for the general good prevailing, they happily united in a system, which does honor to their hearts as men, and their heads as politicians; nor till gratitude has lost a place in the bosoms of Americans, can their exertions, to save a decaying land, be forgotten. In this System we find the energy of a good government united with the freedom of the people, and containing certain great characteristics peculiar to itself, and which presage much future happiness to the subjects of its controul—those great traits, as also the important objects, which must be involved in its administration, will form the subject of my future numbers.

AMERICANUS.

(To be continued.)

EXTRACT FROM "AMERICAN ESSAYS."

The IMPORTANCE *of the* PROTESTANT RELIGION *politically considered.*

Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.

THE Religion which the citizens of America in general profess, is that, for the sake of which our virtuous Fore-Fathers resigned all the honors, the pleasures, the comforts, and almost all the necessaries of life, which many of them enjoyed in abundance in the old world; and traversed the vast and perilous atlantic, to transplant themselves and families in this then rude, uncultivated wilderness, swarming with savage beasts, and far more savage men—It is therefore that Religion which laid the foundation of this new and great Empire: It is the Religion of all others the most favourable to Industry, Commerce, the Arts, Science, Freedom, and consequent temporal Happiness of Mankind: It is the professed religion of the greatest, wisest, and best men this world has produced; and it is the Religion of which we acknowledge GOD to be the author. These will surely be admitted as powerful claims to our particular reverence and respect: To this Religion *Britain* is principally indebted for that happy reformation, and subsequent glorious revolution, which were the harbingers of her present distinguished greatness: To this Religion, and its worthy professors, it must be acknowledged, much is due, in bringing about the late glorious American Revolution: Inspired by this Religion, our truly patriotic Clergy, boldly and zealously stepped forth, and bravely stood our distinguished Sentinels to watch, and warn us against approaching danger: They wisely saw that our religious and civil liberties were inseparably connected; and therefore warmly excited and animated the people, resolutely to oppose and repel every hostile invader: These are some of the temporal blessings flowing from our Religion; and yet many of those pious Christians, to whom, *under God*, we owe much of that fortitude, zeal, perseverance, and inspiration, which carried the American Soldiery through difficulties and dangers, apparently insurmountable, may at this day be ranked among the most needy and dependent men in the community: This is an evil greatly to be deplored; and urgently demands every possible public and private exertion, for the sake of those who have thus generously embraced a life of certain indigence, for the cause of religion and mankind—for the sake of their widows and offspring, who are often left in the most distressed circumstances, and for the honor and security of that Religion, to which we are largely indebted for this happy country. The generality of mankind, are more or less influenced and attracted by the power and splendor of riches; and there are too many of all ranks in every community, who annex an idea of contempt to the appearance of poverty: This is too evident to be controverted: If therefore poverty is often treated with contempt, and always with neglect, what may we not fear for that Religion, of which, in this country, poverty is a distinguishing badge! The mass of mankind are ever captivated by external appearances and shew—barren minds receive no light from within, and therefore cannot so easily be informed and convinced, of the intrinsic worth of true Religion, as they may be caught and insnared by the tinsel and trappings of any other; it is therefore worthy of consideration, what may be the probable effects of the introduction of other religions, and how far their effects, if in any view dangerous, may be counteracted, consistent with the just and generous principles of Toleration.

The ignorant and illiterate, constitute a large majority in all communities—these are awed, their excesses controled, and their opinions biassed, more from the exertions of religion, and the visible respect paid to it by those, whom they deem their superiors, than from its immediate, sensible influence on their own minds: It is therefore well worthy the attention of those who assent to the importance of the PROTESTANT RELIGION *politically considered*, and who conceive that it has had any share in producing the temporal blessings we now enjoy, to honor it with every possible distinguishing mark of pre-eminence and respect, not repugnant to the true spirit of Toleration; and liberally to aid our religious Fathers, in the glorious work of supporting this IMPORTANT BULWARK OF OUR CONSTITUTION; and in the commemoration of those great events, conducive to the revolution and independence of America; may the virtue, zeal, and patriotism of our Clergy, be ever particularly remembered; for it is a truth, as sacred as the idea is serious and alarming, that as our Protestant Clergy shall sink into contempt or neglect, however undeserved, the learned will decline the profession; and then adieu to Religion, Morality, and Liberty; and while in conformity to the benevolent precepts of true religion, as well as the liberal principles of our Constitution, Americans hold out religious liberty to all the various sects, who may be disposed to become our fellow-citizens, let us not be wanting in that attention and respect, due to the Religion we profess, lest it should be suspected, that our tolerant spirit, proceeded more from a total indifference to all religion, than from that liberality of sentiment and god-like Charity, which true religion inculcates and inspires, and which it is hoped will never be dislodged from the generous and benevolent breasts of AMERICANS.

E. C.

"BALTIMORE, ARRIL 21, 1789,

Extract of a letter from George-Town, to a gentleman in this town, dated April 17, 1789.

"Yesterday passed through this town, on his way to New-York, his Excellency GENERAL WASHINGTON, accompanied by the Hon. Charles Thompson, Esq. secretary to Congress.—The former of these personages, goes to fill the seat of President of the United States of America—the last distinction, which a grateful people can bestow, or a life spent with unexampled honor and applause, can deserve.

"To this illustrious appointment, he was unanimously called by the voice of his country.—The annals of history, furnishing nothing so singular in its nature, or so eminently glorious. Heroes and legislators may have enjoyed the confidence of a *majority* of their countrymen; but none but WASHINGTON ever *unanimously* pleased as the former, or was *unanimously* chosen for the latter.—Whilst this very singular event displays to the astonished world, an empire of dissimilar climes, products and interests, listening to the simple and enlightened voice of reason; it on the other hand exhibits to mankind, a character in its nature so very perfect, that for its improvement, nothing can be added.

"From Alexandria to George-Town, he was attended by a voluntary company of private gentlemen—neighbours, friends and children of the *man*, who had saved *their* country and them.—Impelled by gratitude alone, and not moving, servile, at the injunction of command, they chose this method to manifest their affection for him, without whom, freedom had been nothing but a name. An attendant corps, collected together by *such* motives, does more honor to a man, than all the triumphs which Rome ever beheld; and the person *so* honored, is more illustrious, than any monarch on the globe.

"The gentlemen of George-Town, emulous to display their patriotism, and to evince their attachment for the first character in America, respectfully received him at the banks of the Patowmack, and set out to escort him, until they should meet the gentlemen from Baltimore.

"May this virtuous and truly great man, thus in safety be conducted to the place of his destination; and may Heaven, auspicious to his declining years, kindly smoothe over the thorns of legislation—avert from his administration the tumults of popular discord—and cause the same Sun which hath diffused around the meridian of his life so much splendour, finally to go down on his latter end in peace."

The President of the United States arrived in this place on his way to Congress, on Friday afternoon, the 17th inst. with Charles Thompson, Esq. and Col. Humphryes. This great man was met some miles from town, by a large body of respectable citizens on horseback, and conducted, under a discharge of cannon, to Mr. Grant's tavern, through crowds of admiring spectators. At six o'clock, a committee chosen in consequence of a late notification, to adjust the preliminaries for his reception, waited upon him with an address, which, with his answer, we are happy to be able to give to the public. A great number of the citizens were presented to him, and very graciously received. Having arrived too late for a public dinner, he accepted an invitation to supper, from which he retired a little after ten o'clock. The next morning he was in his carriage at half past five o'clock, when he left town, under a discharge of cannon, and attended as on his entrance, by a body of the citizens on horseback. These gentlemen accompanied him seven miles, when alighting from his carriage, he would not permit them to proceed any further; but took leave of them, after thanking them in an affectionate and obliging manner for their politeness. We shall only add on this occasion, that those who had often seen him before, and those who never had, were equally anxious to see him. Such is the rare impression excited by his uncommon character and virtues.

ADDRESS *to the* PRESIDENT *of the* UNITED STATES *of* AMERICA.

SIR,

WE feel the honor you have this day conferred on the town of Baltimore, by favouring it with your presence, infinitely heightened and enhanced by the desirable event which has produced it. Happy to behold your elevation, permit us to re-assure you of our purest love and affection.

In considering the occasion that has once more drawn you from the scenes of domestic ease and private tranquility, our thoughts naturally turn on the situation of our country, previous to the expedient of the late general convention. When you became a member of that body which framed our new and excellent constitution, you dissipated the fears of good men, who dreaded the disunion of the states, and the loss of our liberties in the death of our enfeebled and expiring confederation: And now, sir, by accepting the high authorities of President of the United States of America, you teach us to expect every blessing that can result from the wisest recommendations to Congress, and the most prudent and judicious exercise of those authorities; thus relieving us in the one instance, from the most gloomy apprehensions, as when, in a different capacity, you re-crossed the Delaware; and in the other, opening to our view the most animating prospects, as when you captured Cornwallis.

But it is from the tenor of your own life, and your uniform and upright political principles and conduct, that we derive the fullest assurance that our hopes will be realized. Believing that a faithful performance of public engagements is essential to the prosperity of a people, and their implicit reliance on the promises of government, to its stability, we recollect with pleasure your well known sentiments on this subject, and have no doubt but the other branches of Congress will concur with you in placing public credit on the most solid foundation. We have also every reason to conclude, that under the administration of a Washington, the useful and ingenious arts of peace, the agriculture, commerce, and manufactures of the United States, will be duly favoured and improved, as being far more certain sources of national wealth than the richest mines, and surer means to promote the felicity of a people, than the most successful wars. Thus, sir, we behold a new era springing out of our independence, and a field displayed, where your talents for governing will not be obscured by the splendor of the greatest military exploits. We behold too, an extraordinary thing in the annals of mankind; a free and enlightened people, choosing, by a free election, without one dissenting voice, the late commander in chief of their armies, to watch over and guard their civil rights and privileges.

We sincerely pray that you may long enjoy your present health, and the citizens of the United States have frequent opportunities to testify their veneration of your virtues, by continuing you through many successive elections in the first station of human honor and dignity. In these expressions of our affections and attachment, we are sensible we do not speak the wishes of a town only, but the united feelings of a whole people.

In behalf of the citizens of Baltimore, we have the honor to be, &c. &c.

JAMES M'HENRY,	ROBERT SMITH,
NICHOLAS ROGERS,	O. H. WILLIAMS,
JOSHUA BARNEY,	THOROWGOOD SMITH,
PAUL BENTALAU,	WILLIAM CLEMM,
JOHN BANKSON,	JOHN SWAN.
ISAAC GRIEST,	

The ANSWER *by the* PRESIDENT *of the* UNITED STATES *of* AMERICA.

GENTLEMEN,

THE tokens of regard and affection which I have often received from the citizens of this town, were always acceptable, because, I believed them always sincere.—Be pleased to receive my best acknowledgments for the renewal of them on the present occasion.

If the affectionate partiality of my fellow citizens has prompted them to ascribe greater effects to my conduct and character, than were justly due, I trust the indulgent sentiment on their part, will not produce any presumption on mine.

I cannot now, gentlemen, resist my feelings so much as to withhold the communication of my ideas respecting the actual situation of our national affairs. It appears to me that little more than common sense and common honesty in the transactions of the com-