

TERMS OF THE "AMERICAN."

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OFFICE IN MARKET STREET, NEAR DEER.

THE "AMERICAN" is published every Saturday at TWO DOLLARS per annum to be paid half yearly in advance. No paper discontinued till all arrearages are paid.

No subscriptions received for a less period than SIX MONTHS. All communications or letters on business relating to the office, to insure attention, must be POST PAID.

From the National Intelligencer, Extra, March 4. Inaugural Address OF PRESIDENT HARRISON.

Called from a retirement which I had supposed was to continue for the residue of my life, to fill the Chief Executive office of this great and free nation. I appear before you, fellow-citizens, to take the oaths which the Constitution prescribes, as a necessary qualification for the performance of its duties.

It was the remark of a Roman Consul, in an early period of that celebrated Republic, that a most striking contrast was observable in the conduct of candidates for offices of power and trust, before and after obtaining them—they elude carry out in the latter case the pledges and promises made in the former.

Although the fiat of the People has one forth, proclaiming me the Chief Magistrate of this glorious Union, no longer upon their part remaining to be done, it may be thought that a motive exists to keep up the delusion under which they may be supposed to have acted in relation to my principles and opinions; and perhaps there may be some who promised that they might deceive, and flattered with the intention of betrayal.

However strong may be my present purpose to realize the expectations of a magnanimous and confiding People, I do well understand the infirmities of human nature, and the dangerous temptations to which I shall be exposed, from the magnitude of the power which it has been the pleasure of the People to commit to my hands, not to place my confidence upon the aid of the Almighty Power which has hitherto protected me and enabled me to bring to favorable issues other important, but still greatly inferior trusts, heretofore confided to me by my country.

The broad foundation upon which our Constitution rests, being the People—a breath of theirs having made, as a breath can unmake, change or modify it—it can be assigned to none of the great divisions of Government but that of Democracy. If such is its theory, those who are called upon to administer it must recognize, as its leading principle, the duty of shaping their measures so as to produce the greatest good to the greatest number.

But the great danger to our institutions does not appear to be in a usurpation, by the Government, of power not granted by the People, but by the accumulation, in one of the Departments, of that which was assigned to others. Limited as are the powers which have been granted, still enough have been granted to constitute a despotism, if concentrated in one of the departments. This danger is greatly heightened, or it has been always observable that men are less jealous of encroachments of one department upon another, than upon their own reserved rights.

SUNBURY AMERICAN. AND SHAMOKIN JOURNAL.

Absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of Republics, from which there is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism.—JEFFERSON.

By Masser & Eiseley. Sunbury, Northumberland Co. Pa. Saturday, March 13, 1841. Vol. I—No. XXV.

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think proper to entrust to their agents, and that which they could not have granted, not being possessed by themselves. In other words, there are certain rights possessed by each individual American citizen, which, in his compact with the others, he has never surrendered.

The boasted privilege of a Roman citizen was to him a shield only against a petty provincial ruler, whilst the proud democrat of Athens could console himself under a sentence of death, for a supposed violation of the national faith, which no one understood, and which at the time was the subject of the mockery of all, or of banishment from his home, his family and his country, with or without alleged cause; that it was the act, not of a single tyrant, or hated aristocracy, but of his assembled countrymen.

Notwithstanding the limited sovereignty possessed by the People of the United States, and the restricted grant of power to the Government which they have adopted, enough has been given to accomplish all the objects for which it was created. It has been found powerful in war, and hitherto justice has been administered, an intimate union effected, domestic tranquillity preserved, and personal liberty secured to the citizen.

When the Constitution of the United States first came from the hands of the Convention which formed it, many of the sternest republicans of the day were alarmed at the extent of the power which had been granted to the Federal Government, and more particularly of that portion which had been assigned to the Executive branch.

And knowing the tendency of power to increase itself, particularly when exercised by a single individual, predictions were made that, at no very remote period, the Government would terminate in virtual monarchy.

I proceeded to state, in a summary manner as I can, my opinions of the sources of the evils which have been so extensively complained of, and the correctives which may be applied. Some of the former are unquestionably to be found in the defects of the Constitution; others, in my judgment, are attributable to a misconstruction of some of its provisions.

As, however, one mode of correction is in the power of every President, and consequently in mine, it would be useless, and perhaps injurious, to enumerate the evils of which, in the opinion of many of our fellow citizens, this error of the ages who framed the Constitution may have been the source.

Upwards of half a century has elapsed since the adoption of our present form of government. It would be an object more highly desirable than the gratification of the curiosity of speculative statesmen, if its precise situation could be ascertained, a fair exhibit made of the operations of each of its Departments, of the powers which they respectively claim and exercise, of the collisions which have occurred between them, or the whole Government and those of the States, or either of them.

There is no part of the means placed in the hands of the Executive which might be used with greater effect, for unallowed purposes, than the control of the public press. The maxim which our ancestors derived from the mother country, that "the freedom of the press is the great bulwark of civil and religious liberty," is one of the most precious legacies which they have left us.

essentially and radically changed. This state of things has been in part effected by causes inherent in the Constitution, and in part by the never-failing tendency of political power to increase itself. By making the President the sole distributor of all the patronage of the Government, the framers of the Constitution do not appear to have anticipated at how short a period it would become a formidable instrument to control the free operations of the State governments.

If the opinion of the most approved writers upon that species of mixed Government, which, in modern Europe, is termed Monarchy, in contradistinction to Despotism, is correct, there was wanting no other addition to the powers of our Chief Magistrate to stamp a monarchical character on our Government, but the control of the public finances. And to me it appears strange, indeed, that any one should doubt that the entire control which the President possesses over the officers who have the custody of the public money, by the power of removal with or without cause, does, for all mischievous purposes at least, virtually subject the treasury also to disposal.

I have spoken of the necessity of keeping the respective Departments of the Government, as well as all other authorities of our country, within their appropriate orbits. This is a matter of difficulty in some cases, as the powers which they respectively claim are often not defined by very distinct lines.

and confederate States. Strong as is the tie of interest, it has been often found ineffectual. Men, blinded by their passions, have been known to adopt measures for their country in direct opposition to all the suggestions of policy.

To insure the continuance of this feeling, produced at first by a community of dangers, of sufferings and of interests, the advantages of each were made accessible to all. No participation in any good, possessed by any member of an extensive confederacy, except in domestic government, was withheld from the citizen of any other member.

Our Confederacy, fellow-citizens, can only be preserved by the same forbearance. Our citizens must be content with the exercise of the power with which the Constitution clothes them. The attempt of those of one state to control the domestic institutions of another, can only result in feelings of distrust and jealousy, the certain harbingers of disunion, violence, civil war, and the ultimate destruction of our free institutions.

In consequence of the embarrassed state of business and the currency, some of the States may need difficulty in their financial concerns. However deeply we may regret any thing imprudent excessive in the engagements into which States have entered for purposes of their own, it does not become us to disparage the State Governments, nor to discourage them from making proper efforts for their own relief; on the contrary, it is our duty to encourage them, to the extent of our constitutional authority, to apply their best means, and cheerfully to make all necessary sacrifices and submit to all necessary burdens to fulfil their engagements and maintain their credit, for the character and credit of the several States form part of the character and credit of the whole country.

Unpleasant and even dangerous as a collision may sometimes be, between the constituted authorities or the citizens of our country, in relation to the lines which separate their respective jurisdictions, the results can be of no vital injury to our institutions, if that ardent patriotism, that devoted attachment to liberty, that spirit of melioration and forbearance for which our countrymen were once distinguished continue to be cherished.

I have spoken of the danger to our institutions arising from the unwillingness of the people to believe in its existence, or from the influence of designing men, diverting their attention from the quarter whence it approaches, to a source from which it can never come. This is the old trick of those who would usurp the government of their country.

the Roman people and the Senate under the pressure of supporting the democratic claims of the former against the aristocracy of the latter; Cromwell, in the character of protector of the liberties of the people, became the dictator of England; and Bolivar possessed himself of unlimited power, with the title of his country's Liberator.—There is, on the contrary, no single instance on record of an extensive and well established republic being changed into an autocracy. The tendencies of all such Governments in their decline is to monarchy; and the antagonist principle to liberty there is the spirit of faction—a spirit which assumes the character, and, in times of great excitement, imposes itself upon the people as the genuine spirit of freedom, and the false Chieftains whose course was meted by the Saviour, seeks to, and were it possible would, impose upon the true and most faithful disciples of liberty. It is in periods like this that it behooves the people to be most watchful of those to whom they have intrusted power.

The foregoing remarks relate almost exclusively to matters connected with our domestic concerns. It may be proper, however, that I should give some indication to my fellow citizens of my proposed course of conduct in the management of our foreign relations. I assure them therefore, that it is my intention to use every means in my power to preserve the friendly intercourse which now so happily subsists with every foreign nation; and that, although, of course, not well informed as to the state of any pending negotiations with any of them, I see in the personal characters of the Sovereigns, as well as in the mutual interest of our own and of the Governments with which our relations are most intimate, a pleasing guaranty that the harmony so important to the interests of our subjects, as well as our citizens, will not be interrupted by the advancement of any claim, or pretension upon their part to which our honor would not permit us to yield.

Before concluding, fellow citizens, I must say something to you on the subject of the parties at this time existing in our country. To me it appears perfectly clear, that the interest of that country requires that the violence of the party spirit by which those parties are at this time governed, must be greatly mitigated, if not entirely extinguished, or consequences will ensue which are appalling to be thought of.

Such a tendency has existed—does exist. Always the friend of my countrymen, never their flatterer, it becomes my duty to say to them from this high place to which their partiality has exalted me, that there exists in the land a spirit hostile to their best interests—hostile to liberty itself. It is a spirit contracted in its views, selfish in its object. It looks to the aggrandisement of a few, even to the destruction of the interest of the whole. The entire remedy is with the people. Something, however, may be effected by the means which they have placed in my hands. It is union that we want, not of a party for the sake of that party, but a union of the whole country for the sake of the whole country—for the defence of interests and its honor against foreign aggression, for the defence of those principles for which our ancestors so gloriously contended. As far as it depends upon me, it shall be accomplished. All the influence that I possess, shall be exerted to present the formation at least of an Executive