

the rights of the minority; if such is the case, what national grounds could have been conceived for anticipating such but determined opposition to such an institution at the present day?

Could a different result have been expected, when the consequences which have flowed from its creation and participation from its struggles to perpetuate its existence, had confirmed in so striking a manner, the apprehensions of its earliest opponents; when it had been so clearly demonstrated that a concentrated money power, wielding so vast a capital, and combining such incalculable means of influence, may, in those peculiar conjunctures to which this government is unavoidably exposed, prove an overmatch for the political power of the people themselves; when the true character of its capacity to regulate according to its will and its interests, and the interests of its favorites, the value and production of the labor and property of every man in this extended country had been so fully and fearfully developed; when it was notorious that all classes of the great community had by means of the power of influence it thus possesses, been infected to madness with a spirit of heedless speculation; when it had been seen that, secure in the support of the combination of influences by which it was surrounded, it could violate its charter, and set the laws at defiance with impunity; and when, too, it had become most apparent that to believe that such an accumulation of powers can ever be granted without the certainty of being abused, was to indulge in a fatal delusion.

To avoid the necessity of a permanent debt, and its consequences, I have advocated, and endeavored to carry into effect, the policy of confining the appropriations for the public service to such objects only as are clearly within the constitutional authority of the federal government, of excluding from its expenses those improvident and unauthorized grants of public money for works of internal improvement, which were so wisely arrested by the constitutional interposition of my predecessor, and which, if they had not been so checked, would long before this time have involved the finances of the general government in embarrassments far greater than those now experienced by any of the states; of limiting all our expenditures to that simple, unostentatious, and economical administration of public affairs which is alone consistent with the character of our institutions: of collecting annually from the customs, and sales of public land, a revenue fully adequate to defray the expenses thus incurred, but, under no pretence whatsoever, to impose taxes on the people to a greater amount than was actually necessary to the public service, conducted upon the principles I have stated.

In lieu of a National Bank, or a dependence upon banks of any description, for the management of our fiscal affairs, I recommend the adoption of the system which is now in successful operation. That system affords every requisite facility for the transaction of the pecuniary concerns of the Government; will, it is confidently anticipated, produce in other respects many of the benefits which have been from time to time expected from the creation of a National Bank, but which have never been realized; avoid the manifold evils inseparable from such an institution; diminish, to a greater extent than could be accomplished by any other measure of reform, the patronage of the Federal Government—a wise policy in all Governments, but more especially so in one like ours, which works well only in proportion as it is made to rely for its support upon the unbiased and unadulterated opinions of its constituents; do away, forever, all dependence on corporate bodies, either in raising, collecting, safe-keeping, or disbursing the public revenues; and place the Government equally above the temptation of fostering a dangerous and unconstitutional institution at home, or the necessity of adapting its policy to the views and interests of a still more formidable money power abroad.

It is by adopting and carrying out these principles, under circumstances the most arduous and discouraging, that the attempt has been made, thus far successfully, to demonstrate to the people of the United States that a National Bank at all times, and a National Debt, except it be incurred at a period when the honor and safety of the nation demand the temporary sacrifice of a policy which should only be abandoned in such exigencies, are not merely unnecessary, but in direct and deadly hostility to the principles of their Government, and to their own permanent welfare.

The progress made in the development of these positions, appears in the preceding sketch of the past history of the present state of the financial concerns of the Federal Government. The facts there stated fully authorize the assertion, that all the purposes for which this Government was instituted have been accomplished during four years of greater pecuniary embarrassment than were ever before experienced in time of peace, and in the face of opposition as formidable as any that was ever before arrayed against the policy of an administration: that this has been done when the ordinary revenues of the Government were generally decreasing, as well from the operation of the laws, as the condition of the country; without the creation of a permanent public debt, or incurring any liability, other

than such as the ordinary resources of the Government will speedily discharge, and without the agency of a National Bank.

If this view of the proceedings of the government, for the period it embraces, be warranted by the facts as they are known to exist; if the army and navy have been sustained to the full extent authorized by law, and which Congress deemed sufficient for the defence of the country and the protection of its rights and its home; if its civil and diplomatic service has been equally sustained, if ample provision has been made for the administration of justice and the execution of the laws; if the claim upon public gratitude in behalf of the soldiers of the revolution have been promptly met, and faithfully discharged; if there have been no failures in defraying the very large expenditures growing out of that long-continued and salutary policy of peacefully removing the Indians to regions of comparative safety and prosperity; if the public faith has at all times, and every where, been most scrupulously maintained by a prompt discharge of the numerous, extended, and diversified claims on the Treasury; if all these great and permanent objects, with many others that might be stated, have, for a series of years, marked by peculiar obstacles and difficulties, been successfully accomplished without a resort to a permanent debt, or the aid of a national bank; have we not a right to expect that a policy, the object of which has been to sustain the public service independently of either of these fruitful sources of discord, will receive the final sanction of a people whose unbiased and fairly elicited judgment upon public affairs is never ultimately wrong?

That embarrassments in the pecuniary concerns of individuals, of unexampled extent and duration, have recently existed in this as in other commercial nations, is undoubtedly true. To suppose it necessary now to trace these reverses to their sources, would be a reflection on the intelligence of my fellow citizens. Whatever may have been the obscurity in which the subject was involved during the earlier stages of the revolution, there cannot now be many by whom the whole question is not fully understood.

Not deeming it within the constitutional power of the general government to repair private losses sustained by reverses in business having no connexion with the public service, either by direct appropriations from the treasury, or by special legislation designed to secure exclusive privileges and immunities to individuals or classes in preference to, and at the expense of, the great majority necessarily excluded from any participation in them, no attempt to do so has been either made, recommended, or encouraged, by the present Executive.

It is believed, however, that the great purposes for the attainment of which the federal government was instituted have not been lost sight of. Intrusted only with certain limited powers, cautiously enumerated, distinctly specified and defined with a precision and clearness which would seem to defy misconstruction, it has been my constant aim to confine myself within the limits so clearly marked out, and so carefully guarded.—Having always been of opinion that the best preservative of the union of the states is to be found in a total abstinence from the exercise of all doubtful powers on the part of the federal government, rather than in attempts to assume them by a loose construction of the constitution, or an ingenious perversion of its words, I have endeavored to avoid recommending any measure which I had reason to apprehend would, in the opinion even of a considerable minority of my fellow citizens, be regarded as retrenching on the rights of the states, or the provisions of the hallowed instrument of our Union. Viewing the aggregate powers of the federal government as a voluntary concession of the states, it seemed to me that such only should be exercised as were at the time intended to be given.

I have been strengthened too, in the propriety of this course, by the conviction that all efforts to go beyond this tend to produce dissatisfaction and distrust, to excite jealousies and to provoke resistance. Instead of adding strength to the federal government, even when successful, they must ever prove a source of incurable weakness, by alienating a portion of those whose adhesion is indispensable to the great aggregate of united strength, and whose voluntary attachment is, in my estimation far more essential to the efficiency of a government strong in the best of all possible strength—the confidence and attachment of all those who make up its constituent elements.

Thus believing, it has been my purpose to secure to the whole people, and to every member of the confederacy, by general, salutary, and equal laws alone, the benefit of those republican institutions which it was the end and aim of the constitution to establish, and the impartial influence of which is, in my judgment, indispensable to their preservation. I cannot bring myself to believe that the lasting happiness of the people, the prosperity of the states, or the permanency of their union, can be maintained by giving preference or priority to any class of citizens in the distribution of benefits or privileges, or by the adoption of measures which enrich one portion of the Union at the expense of another; nor can I see in

the interference of the federal government with the local legislation and reserved rights of the states a remedy for present, or a security against future danger.

The first, and assuredly not the least, important step towards relieving the country from the condition into which it had been plunged by excesses in trade, banking, and credits of all kinds, was to place the business transactions of the government itself on a solid basis; giving and receiving in all cases value for value, and neither countenancing nor encouraging in others that delusive system of credits from which it has been found so difficult to escape, and which has left behind it nothing but the wrecks that mark its fatal career.

That the financial affairs of the government are now, and have been during the whole period of these wide-spread difficulties conducted with a strict and inviolable regard to this great fundamental principle, and that by the assumption and maintenance of the stand thus taken on the very threshold of the approaching crisis, more than by any other cause or causes whatever, the community at large has been shielded from the incalculable evils of a general and indefinite suspension of specie payments, and a consequent annihilation, for the whole period it might have lasted, of a just and invariable standard of value, will, it is believed, at this period, scarcely be questioned.

A steady adherence on the part of the government, to the policy which has produced such salutary results, aided by judicious state legislation, and, what is not less important, by the industry, enterprise, perseverance, and economy of the American people, cannot fail to raise the whole country, at an early period, to a state of solid and enduring prosperity, not subject to be again overthrown by the suspension of banks, or the explosion of a bloated credit system. It is for the people, and their representatives, to decide whether or not the permanent welfare of the country (which all good citizens equally desire, however widely they may differ as to the means of its accomplishment) shall be in this way secured; or whether the management of the pecuniary concerns of the government, and, by consequence, to a great extent, those of individuals also, shall be carried back to a condition of things which fostered those contractions and expansions of the currency, and those reckless abuses of credit, from the baleful effects of which the country has so deeply suffered—a return that compromise, in the end, no better results than to re-produce the embarrassments the government has experienced; and to remove from the shoulders of the present, to those of fresh victims, the bitter fruits of that spirit of speculative enterprise to which our countrymen are so liable, and upon which the lessons of experience are so unavailing. The choice is an important one, and I sincerely hope that it may be wisely made.

A report from the secretary of war, presenting a detailed view of the affairs of that department, accompanies this communication.

The desultory duties connected with the removal of the Indians, in which the army has been constantly engaged on the northern and western frontiers, and in Florida, have rendered it impracticable to carry into full effect the plan recommended by the secretary for improving its discipline. In every instance where the regiments have been concentrated, they have made great progress; and the best results may be anticipated from a continuance of this system. During the last season, a part of the troops have been employed in removing Indians from the interior to the territory assigned them in the west—a duty which they have performed efficiently, and with praise-worthy humanity; and that portion of them which has been stationed in Florida continued active operations there throughout the heats of summer.

The policy of the United States in regard to the Indians, of which a succinct account is given in my message of 1838, and of the wisdom and expediency of which I am fully satisfied, has been continued in active operation throughout the whole period of my administration. Since the spring of 1837, more than 40,000 Indians have been removed to their new homes west of the Mississippi; and I am happy to add, that all accounts concur in representing the result of this measure as eminently beneficial to that people.

The emigration of the Seminoles alone has been attended with serious difficulty, and occasioned bloodshed; hostilities having been commenced by the Indians in Florida, under the apprehension that they would be compelled, by force, to comply with their treaty stipulations. The execution of the treaty of Payne's Landing, signed in 1832, but not ratified until 1834, was postponed, at the solicitation of the Indians, until 1836, when they again renewed their agreement to remove peacefully to their new homes in the west. In the face of this solemn and renewed compact, they broke their faith, and commenced hostilities by the massacre of Major Dade's command, the murder of their agent, Gen. Thompson, and other acts of cruel treachery. When this alarming and unexpected intelligence reached the seat of government, every effort appears to have been made to reinforce General Clinch, who commanded the troops then in Florida. Gen. Eustis was despatched with reinforcements from Charleston;

troops were called out from Alabama, Tennessee, and Georgia; and Gen. Scott was sent to take the command, with ample powers and ample means. At the first alarm, Gen. Gaines organized a force at New Orleans, and, without waiting for orders, landed in Florida, where he delivered over the troops he had brought with him to Gen. Scott.

Governor Call was subsequently appointed to conduct a summer campaign, and, at the close of it, was replaced by Gen. Jesup. These events and changes took place under the administration of my predecessor. Notwithstanding the exertions of the experienced officers who had command there for eighteen months, on entering upon the administration of the government I found the territory of Florida a prey to Indian atrocities. A strenuous effort was immediately made to bring these hostilities to a close; and the army, under Gen. Jesup, was reinforced until it amounted to 10,000 men, and furnished with abundant supplies of every description. In this campaign a great number of the enemy were captured and destroyed; but the character of the contest only was changed. The Indians, having been defeated in every engagement, dispersed in small bands throughout the country, and became an enterprising, formidable, and successful banditti. General Taylor, who succeeded Gen. Jesup, used his best exertions to subdue them, and was seconded in his efforts by the officers under his command; but he, too, failed to protect the territory from their depredations. By an act of signal and cruel treachery, they broke the truce made with them by Gen. Macomb, who was sent from Washington for the purpose of carrying into effect the expressed wishes of Congress, and have continued their devastations ever since. Gen. Armstrong, who was in Florida when Gen. Taylor left the army, by permission, assumed the command, and, after active summer operations, was met by propositions for peace; and, from the fortunate coincidence of the arrival in Florida, at the same period, of a delegation from the Seminoles who are happily settled west of the Mississippi, and are now anxious to persuade their countrymen to join them there, hopes were for some time entertained that the Indians might be induced to leave the territory without further difficulty. These hopes have proved fallacious, and hostilities have been renewed throughout the whole of the territory. That this contest has endured so long, is to be attributed to causes beyond the control of the government. Experienced generals have had the command of the troops; officers and soldiers have alike distinguished themselves for their activity, patience, and enduring courage; the army has been constantly furnished with supplies of every description; and we must look for the causes which have so long protracted the issue of the contest, in the vast extent of the theatre of hostilities, the almost insurmountable obstacles presented by the nature of the country, the climate, and the wily character of the savages.

The sites for marine hospitals on the rivers and lakes, which I was authorized to select and cause to be purchased, have all been designated; but, the appropriation not proving sufficient, conditional arrangements only have been made for their acquisition. It is for Congress to decide whether those conditional purchases shall be sanctioned, and the humane intentions of the law carried into full effect. The Navy, as will appear from the accompanying Report of the Secretary, has been usefully and honorably employed in the protection of our commerce and citizens in the Mediterranean, the Pacific, on the coast of Brazil, and in the Gulf of Mexico. A small squadron, consisting of the frigate Constellation and the sloop of war Boston, under Commodore Kearney, is now on its way to China and Indian seas, for the purpose of attending to our interest in that quarter; and commander Aulick, in the sloop of war Yorktown, has been instructed to visit the Sandwich and Society Islands, the coasts of New Zealand and Japan, together with other ports and islands frequented by our whale ships, for the purpose of giving them countenance and protection, should they be required. Other smaller vessels have been, and still are, employed in prosecuting the surveys of the coast of the United States, directed by various acts of Congress; and those which have been completed will shortly be laid before you.

The exploring expedition, at the latest date, was preparing to leave the Bay of Islands, New Zealand, in further prosecution of objects which have, thus far, been successfully accomplished. The discovery of a new continent, which was first seen in lat. 66° 2' south, longitude 154° 27' east, and afterwards in lat. 66° 31' south, longitude 153° 40' east, by lieutenants Wilkes and Hudson, for an extent of eighteen hundred miles; but on which they were prevented from landing by vast bodies of ice which encompassed it, is one of the honorable results of the enterprise. Lieutenant Wilkes bears testimony to the zeal and good conduct of his officers and men; and it is but justice to that officer to state that he appears to have performed the duties assigned him with an arduous ability, and perseverance, which give every assurance of an honorable issue to the undertaking.

The report of the postmaster general, herewith transmitted, will exhibit the service of that department the last year, and its present condition. The transportation has been maintained during the year to the full extent authorized by the existing laws; some improvements have been effected, which the public interest seemed urgently to demand, but not involving any material additional expenditure; the contractors have generally performed their engagements with fidelity; the postmasters, with few exceptions, have rendered their accounts and paid their quarterly balances with promptitude; and the whole service of the department has maintained the efficiency for which it has, for several years, been distinguished. The acts of congress establishing new mail routes, and requiring more expensive services on others, and the increasing wants of the country, have, for three years past, carried the expenditures something beyond the accruing revenues; the excess having been met, until the past year, by the surplus which had previously accumulated. That surplus having been exhausted, and the anticipated increase in the revenue not having been realized, owing to the depression in the commercial business of the country, the finances of the department exhibit a small deficiency at the close of the last fiscal year. Its resources, however, are ample; and the reduced rates of compensation for the transportation service, which may be expected on the future lettings, from the general reduction of prices, with the increase of revenue that may reasonably be anticipated from the revival of commercial activity, must soon place the finances of the department in a prosperous condition.

Considering the unfavorable circumstances which have existed during the past year, it is a gratifying result that the revenue has not declined, as compared with the preceding year, but on the contrary it exhibits a small increase; the circumstances referred to having had no other effect than to check the expected income.

It will be seen that the postmaster general suggests certain improvements in the establishment, designed to reduce the weight of the mails, cheapen the transportation, insure greater regularity in the service, and a considerable reduction in the rates of letter-postage—an object highly desirable. The subject is one of general interest to the community and is respectfully recommended to your consideration.

The suppression of the African slave trade has received the continued attention of the government. The brig Dolphin and schooner Grampus have been employed during the last season on the coast of Africa, for the purpose of preventing such portions of that trade as was said to be prosecuted under the American flag. After cruising off those parts of the coast most usually resorted to by slavers, until the commencement of the rainy season, these vessels returned to the United States for supplies, and have since been despatched on a similar service.

From the reports of the commanding officers, it appears that the trade is now principally carried on under Portuguese colors, and they express the opinion that the apprehension of their presence on the slave coast has, in a great degree, arrested the prostitution of the American flag to this inhuman purpose. It is hoped that, by continuing to maintain this force in that quarter, and by the exertions of the officers in command, much will be done to put a stop to whatever portion of this traffic may have been carried on under the American flag, and to prevent its use in a trade which, while it violates the laws, is equally an outrage on the rights of others and the feelings of humanity.—The efforts of the several governments who are anxiously seeking to suppress this traffic, must, however, be directed against the facilities afforded by what are now recognized as legitimate commercial pursuits, before that object can be freely accomplished.

Supplies of provisions, water-casks, merchandise, and articles connected with the slave trade, are, it is understood, freely carried by vessels of different nations to these slave factories; and effects of the factors are transported openly from one slave station to another, without interruption or punishment by either of the nations to which they belong, engaged in the commerce of that region. I submit to your judgments whether this government, having been first to prohibit, by adequate penalties, the slave trade—the first, to declare it piracy—should not be the first, also, to forbid to its citizens all trade with the slave factories on the coast of Africa; giving an example to all nations in this respect, which, if fairly followed, cannot fail to produce the most effective results in breaking up those dens of iniquity.

M. VAN BUREN.
Washington, December 5, 1840.

Prospects of Resumption Brightening.—The Lancaster Intelligencer of the 15th ult. says: "We are pleased to learn by Dicknell's Reporter, that the Philadelphia banks are preparing to resume on the 15th of January, and that it is expected they will certainly be able to go on paying specie."

A Fond Couple.—James Hunter, sentenced to death for the murder of B. Lovejoy, in Georgia, has been pardoned by the Legislature of that State. The Milledgeville Record states that the following circumstances came out, under legislative examination:—After the conviction of Hunter, he was visited in prison by his wife. During one of her visits she clad herself in his apparel, and he dressed himself up in hers, and in that disguise made his escape. After some hours the

affair was discovered, and the jailer detained the wife in prison, as being accessory to the escape of her husband. Hunter, hearing in some way that his wife was kept in jail, came forth voluntarily and gave himself up to the proper authority, to suffer upon the gallows, in order to relieve an affectionate and confiding wife from the walls of a prison. Under these circumstances, the Legislature granted the pardon.



"JUSTICE AND EQUALITY."

THE FREE TRADER.

Weaver & Wise, Editors.

Ottawa, Ill., Friday, January 1, 1841.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Kind friends and patrons, a happy New Year! Read the poetic effusion of our esteemed, but unknown correspondent L.—. The sentiments of the poetry are, without doubt, the productions of a mind, well stored with pious thoughts and given to deep meditation. The author will please accept our thanks for past favors, together with, our cordial wishes for a happy, joyous New Year, hoping we may be favored with productions of the same pen hereafter.

Mr. J. HOFFMAN, Peru, Illinois, is authorized to act as agent for this paper.

Commissioners' Court.

We learn that a special session of the Commissioners' Court of this county, will be held on Monday next.

Snow—Sleighing.

From sparkling eyes to drink in draughts of bliss,
From rosy lips to steal the honeyed kiss,
And whilst the fair one 'gainst your side reposes
To sweeten her in the drifted snows!

Reading (Pa.) Gazette.

By jolly, look at the snow! How it makes a fellow's eyes glisten! Not very deep, but slick and smooth. So, haul out that sled with the *warrior* box, and give us that little nag what runs a mile a "minut"—let me help you to a seat Miss Warm—driver! all ready. In the language of Jersey Short, I wouldn't give a *cow* for a sleigh-ride unless I went like a whirlwind. Give me a frosty sky, blood horses, and plenty of new laid snow, and I'll whittle off my fifteen miles an hour, making the old woods spin by me as if they were running off a reel. Sleighb—by the soul of my meerschaum, sir, it's a blessing rarely vouchsafed us in these degenerate times, and when it does come, I've enough of the old chip in me to make the most of it, kick care to the kennel, and go whizzing helter-skelter over hill and dale, like the wizard horseman, or a will-o'-the-wisp gone wild.

"Wasn't those jolly times, with winters like winters, and pretty girls, such as in these days would set a continent on fire? Ah! the world's growing worse and worse daily—the horses don't trot as they used to—we haven't snow enough for a fairy's frolic—and as for getting up your tearing sleigh-rides by moonlight, with a dozen or more vehicles in company, all the pretty girls of two counties, and jokes, songs, soft words, and merry laughter by the bushes—why, I verily believe, sir, you could as well make a mile stone dance a hornpipe. Then too, the young fellows!—they are not worth a rotten potatoe. Instead of the bold, manly, open-air exercise of their fathers—whirling along with their sweet hearts in the frosty moonlight, making the dear creatures' eyes dance and their cheeks tingle with the delicious sport, they moan and flirt, and play the fop in some hot, crowded ball room, skipping about more daintily than butterflies, and shivering at a breath of cold air, as if they had an ague fit. Pshaw on such puny atomies!—I'd cut off my hair with a shilling if he dared to ape the acrobats!"

"Faith, sir, there's nothing like your sleighing to get up a love scrape, and I'd like to know how one can resist it, when he sits so closely by the side of his partner that he can feel her breath upon his cheek, and hear the lowest whisper of her trembling voice! Then, too, you must both be under one buffalo, and your feet will get together and keep warm, and your hands stray naturally into each other's, and by and by, even your lips get somewhat close to hers, and you catch yourself kissing before you're aware of it. Ah! my boy, there's many a sweet beauty loses her little heart at such times, and finds herself engaged!—she scarcely knows how—at the end of some moonlight sleigh-ride. If you don't wish your daughter to get married yet, and any guy gallant asks them to a sleighing party, take the impudent scoundrel by the collar, and—battery or no battery—canoe him within an inch of his life!"

Impudent Dictation.

We observe by a number of Pennsylvania papers, that the Harrison Presidential Electors, immediately after the adjournment of the College, signed a recommendation in favor of Thaddeus Stevens, as Post Master General, and a brother of the famous Secretary Burrows, as collector of the Customs at Philadelphia.

For the good of the country and the honor of the nation, we hope the President-elect, will exclude Stevens from a seat in the Cabinet. He is a disgrace to the party with which he stands identified—he is morally and politically unfit for any civil station within the gift of the president. Were we anxious to see the dominant party ruined at the expense of public good, we would wish for the appointment of Stevens to this station, for past events furnish sufficient evidence, that no man can destroy a party quicker than Thaddeus Stevens. Marked by the hand of Nature, in the language of the Duke of Gloster, his portrait is taken "to life!"

"Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
That dogs bark at me as I halt by them—
I am determined to prove a villain
And hate the idle pleasures of these days."

'Tis New Year's day! Pretty darn'd cold at that! Stranger! shut the door! See here, while you're warm in yourself, won't you just step down stairs and shovel away the snow with your feet, and pack up a lump of coal!