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From the National Intelligencer.

HISTORY
of the last session of Congress.
(Concluded)

Amendment of the Constitution respecting the election of President.

During the month of February propositions of amendment to the constitution with respect to the mode of choosing the president and vice president were offered to the house of representatives from the states of Vermont, New York, and North Carolina, by their respective delegates.

After several unavailing attempts to attract the attention of the house to this interesting subject, Mr. Van Cortlandt made a vigorous and successful effort to that effect on the 1st May. He was supported by Mr. Elmendorf; and opposed by Messrs. Huger, Foster, Davis, Bayard and Mott; when the yeas and nays were called on taking into consideration the amendatory proposition, and carried—yeas 38, nays 30.

The proposition was then read as follows:

"Resolved, That in all future elections of president and vice president the persons voted for shall be particularly designated by declaring which is voted for as president and which as vice president."

A debate ensued of a nature as extraordinary as desultory, in which Mr. Huger threw himself into prominent view as an opponent of the *present* adoption of the amendment, and was aided by Messrs. Bayard, Foster and Dana.

These gentlemen declared that they had not matured their judgments on the expediency of the amendment; though their impressions were rather favorable to it; but that they should resist its adoption at this late period of the session, when the house was thin, and all expectation of the subject being discussed was over. The more important an amendment to the constitution, the more commanding was the necessity of giving it, previously to adoption, a full, calm and dispassionate examination. As this could not be obtained at this period, they considered it their duty, if coerced into a vote on the subject, to reject it.

On the other hand among the friends of the amendment, Messrs. Van Cortlandt, Elmendorf, Bacon and Mitchell, declared that though the day were late, it was never too late to do a good act, or to discharge a commanding duty.—The constitution was acknowledged on all hands to be defective; its defects had recently developed a scene which might have been attended with effects fatal to the harmony of the union; and it became the constitutional organs of the public will to embrace the earliest proper occasion for redressing an evil of such an alarming nature. If the house were thin, owing to several members having abandoned their seats, that very circumstance was an evidence that those who left the house were friendly or at least indifferent to the adoption of the amendment.

After a succession of motions of postponement variously modified, the amendment was agreed to by the constitutional majority of 49 to 24; and afterwards passed at a third reading by 47 yeas to 14 nays.

It may be proper to notice that every negative vote was federal.

This proposed amendment was taken to the senate, where after being warmly opposed by Messrs. Morris and Tracy, and warmly supported by Messrs. Breckenridge and Clinton, it failed of adoption by the deficiency of a single vote: the votes for it being 15; and those against 9.

In this body also, every negative vote, except that of Mr. Stone, was federal.

Thus terminated in abortion a measure of vast interest to the peace and happiness of the union. It had been hoped that the experience of recent events wo[illegible] have insured the universal concurre[illegible] of all good men of whatever party [illegible]endment, which, by cutting off [illegible] of intrigue, would have for[illegible] suffrage so effectually [illegible]n from being ele[illegible]f president, with[illegible]ived the unequivocal approbation of a majority of the people. But the hope, rational as it may have appeared to minds uncontaminated by the corrupting influence of party, proved illusive; and those, who dared not to avow an open opposition, found other means to frustrate these honest and enlightened views. It doubtless occurred to such men, that, in the unanticipated vicissitude of political events, means might be profitably employed to the furtherance of party purposes which the proposed amendment would destroy.—Sensibly feeling the want of a majority on their side, their pride was not too inflexible, in the contemplation of such a crisis, to stoop to measures calculated to triumph by fraud and intrigue over the will of the nation. The ascription of such hidden views would be uncharitable, could any other national motives be inferred from their conduct. But in vain shall any mind, in pursuit of other motives, explore the causes and tendency of this opposition. There is but one mode in which a fair and unequivocal expression of the national will can be obtained in the election of a president, and that is by a designation of the votes given; and they who oppose this mode must necessarily be considered as hostile to a fair and unequivocal expression. These considerations ought not to be suffered to pass, without the deliberate and serious reflection of the people, who, under a due sense of their important rights, ought not to contemplate their sacrifice with unconcern.

Beside the foregoing detail of proceedings, other objects of much interest occupied the attention of the legislature.

ALIENS.

An act passed admitting aliens to the right, of citizenship, abrogates the severe restrictions heretofore imposed, and in accordance with the sentiments of the chief magistrate, lessens the period of probation, not however, to the abandonment of regulations circumspect, and calculated to conciliate, by intermediate provisions, the varying opinions of those who deemed it politic to encourage or repress an easy access to to the possession of political rights.

By the act of June 18, 1798, a residence in the United States of fourteen years, and a declaration of an intention to become a citizen, made five years before admission, were required before an alien was admitted to citizenship.—By the act of this session five years residence, and a similar declaration made three years before admission, are required.

MILITIA.

A bill supplementary to an act more effectually to provide for the national defence by establishing an uniform *militia* was brought into the house of representatives on the 8th of February, by which it was prescribed; that the militia generally should meet one day in each year; that the flank companies of grenadiers, light infantry or riflemen, to be composed of persons between the ages of 18 and 26 years, formed by voluntary enrolment, or by lot; and the artillery consisting of persons between the ages of 24 and 36 years, formed in the same manner, should uniform and accoutre themselves, and be embodied for six days preceding the general regimental muster. The president is authorised, in case of danger, to order out the flank and artillery companies for thirty days in each year.

Several attempts were made during the session to take this bill into consideration; but they all failed from the superior interest taken in other measures.

The supineness of our public councils on this subject cannot be too severely reprehended. While every one acknowledges the commanding magnitude of it, and the necessity of making energetic provisions during a season of tranquility, few men have been found zealous enough to devote that full and persevering attention, which can alone surmount the difficulties with which it is attended. The duty of immediate and effectual attention is sacred. The liberties of our country may hang upon it. Let us then anticipate from the labours of the next session a discharge of this patriotic duty.

POST OFFICE.

An act was passed discontinuing 12 old, and establishing 63 new post roads. By this act the post master general is directed to contract for carrying the mail between Petersburg, Virginia, and Louisville, Georgia, for five years, in mail coaches or stages, limitting the expense to a sum not exceeding one-third more than the present expense.

By these two features of the act facility and security are imparted to this important department, on the fidelity and competency of which essentially depend the interests of the union. This measure, in connexion with the energetic arrangements of the head of the department, adopted during the session, for accelerating the progress of the mail, may be considered evidences of a disposition to open as wide as practicable, every ligitimate avenue to information, thereby enabling the people to judge for themselves, and to exercise their rights of opinion free from a dangerous and degrading dependence upon others.

One circumstance, however, is too interesting to the public welfare, not to be distinctly mentioned. For several years past a large sum, arising from the proceeds of this department, instead of being applied to its extension and perfection, has been carried into the general treasury, and applied to objects altogether foreign to the institution. In a republican government, and more especially in its infancy, this ought not to be.—So far from repressing by impositions, the diffusion of information, it ought to be encouraged; and while an appropriation of other funds is not required for this purpose, it [illegible]ely ought not to be deprived of its own [illegible]ar resources, the influence of whic[illegible]owever small in the general fiscal op[illegible]tions of the government, [illegible]ould have been most sensibly felt in the e[illegible]tension of new offices, the improvement [illegible] roads, and numerous other incidental objects that claim attention.

Admission of Stenographers on the floor of the Senate.

On the 4th of January, the editor of the National Intelligencer requested permission to occupy a position in the lower area [illegible]e senate chamber, to take the debates of that body. A motion being made, extending the right generally to reporters, occasioned much debate, in which the right was advocated by the republican, and opposed by the federal side of the house. The motion finally prevailed by 18 yeas to 12 nays.

This measure opens a new door to public information, and may be considered as the prelude to a more genuine sympathy between the senate and the people than has heretofore subsisted.

In the commencement of this history, it was observed that an unprecedented mass of information had been imparted by the executive to the legislature. This circumstance has already appeared in the progress of our details. But the mention of much information communicated has been deferred to avoid breaking the chain of important events in the succession in which they occurred.

During the session the following documents were presented:

From the Department of State.

A statement of the comparative duties paid in the ports of Great Britain on goods imported into Great Britain, in American, foreign and British vessels, since the 5th of January, 1798.

This document, though very interesting, admits not, from its nature, either of analysis or generalisation.

A statement of spoliations on our commerce committed under the authority of Spain.

Laws of the North Western and Indiana territories.

Sundry documents relative to the transactions of the United States with the Barbary powers, exhibiting with great minuteness, the expenditure of public money since the year 1791, in the whole amounting to 2,059,320 dollars.

From the Treasury Department.

A statement of the *exports* from October 1, 1800, to October 1, 1801, by which it appeared that the total exports amounted to 93,020,513 dollars of which 46,377,792 dollars consisted of the produce of the U. States, and 46,642,721 dollars of foreign productions.

This statement attested the flourishing and progressive state of agriculture and commerce, as the exports of the preceding year amounted to only 70,976,800 dollars, making an increase in one year of 22,043,713 dollars.

A statement of the situation of the *marine hospitals* belonging to the United States, by which it appeared that hospitals, under the entire or concurrent superintendance of the United States had been established at Boston, Newport, Norfolk, Charleston, Baltimore, New York, and Philadelphia.

That the whole sum received from seamen, either in private or in public service, amounts to 147,875 dollars and 58 cents, of which 6,185 dollars and 33 cents have been applied to the purchase of the hospital at Gosport, near Norfolk, and 74,636 dollars 51 cents have been expended for the relief of sick seamen; that 73,761 dollars 61 cents remain unexpended in the hands of sundry collectors and agents, and that 6,707 dollars 87 cents are due to certain agents who have expended more than has been received by them.

A detailed statement of the official emoluments and expenditures of the officers employed in collecting the *internal revenues* from January 1, 1800, to January 1, 1801, by which it appeared that 453 officers were employed in the collection, who received 139,280 dollars.

A statement of the amount of duties for the same period upon domestic distilled spirits, viz.

	dollars 139,839
On country stills,	372,561
On refined sugar,	65,240
On retailers licenses,	65,159
On sales at auction,	51,650
On carriages,	77,871
Stamps,	221,339
Amounting in the whole, with the additional of the fractional cents, to	993,661

The Treasurer's Accounts.

Eighteen tables, exhibiting in detail statements of the quantities of and duties on each description of imported commodities, the amount of foreign and domestic tonnage, the state of the public debt, the disposition of the sold and unsold public lands, &c. &c. from the year 1790 to 1800 inclusive.

These documents defy analysis. They, perhaps, condense more valuable information respecting the fiscal concerns of the United States, than are to be found elsewhere in print.

An account of the receipts and expenditures for the year 1800, by which it appeared that the receipts had been 12,443,978 dollars, and the expenditures 11,952,534 dollars.

A statement of the importations in American and foreign vessels from October 1, 1798, to the 30th September 1800.

These statements are also given at great detail, and from their nature admit not of generalisation.

A report of the commissioners of the *sinking fund*, stating the aggregate purchases made of the debt to the amount of 4,738,367 dollars; and that their remained in the hands of the treasurer, 449,069 dollars at the disposition of the commissioners.

Estimates for the year 1802, requiring for

The civil department, dollars	564,235
Miscellaneous objects,	283,564
Intercourse with foreign nations,	132,116
Military,	1,366,840
Naval,	1,101,390
Total, including fractional cents,	3,448,147

It will be remarked that this statement neither includes the appropriations for the debt, or for carrying into effect the French or British conventions.

The *receipts and expenditures* from October 1, 1800, to October 1, 1801; being receipts 12,424,318 dollars; and expenditures 12,894,936 dollars.

A statement of the *District Tonnage* of the United States, on the 31st December, 1800, amounting to 972,492 tons; with a comparative statement of the actual and duties tonnage for the years 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, and 1799.

A detailed statement relative to the *mint* from its establishment.

A statement, exhibiting the amount of duties received, and drawbacks allowed, for the years 1798, 1799, and 1800, viz

Years.	*Duties.*	*Drawbacks.*
1798,	11,394,074	4,701,742
1799,	13,610,814	4,905,345
1800,	15,261,279	5,244,282

Emoluments of the officers employed in the collection of the customs.

A statement of the exports from the Mississippi District for the year 1801, amounting to 1,095,412 dollars.

A plat of the lands of the United States within the boundary line north west of the Ohio.

From the War Department.

A statement of the *ordnance*, arms and military stores. A statement of the present *military establishment* of the United States, whereby the aggregate authorised establishment appeared to amount to 5,438 men, of which 1,384 were wanting to complete the establishment—accompanied by an estimate of all the posts and stations where garrisons will be expedient, and of the number of men requisite for each garrison, comprising 20 companies of infantry, each company to consist of 76 men, exclusive of commissioned officers and cadets.

A statement, subsequently rendered, exhibiting the sum that would be required for the military establishment for the year 1802, viz. dollars 948,762.

With the additional sum of 158,500 to meet the expenses incident to the discharge of supernumerary officers and men.

From the Navy Department.

A statement of the vessels *belonging to the navy*, with their present state of equipment, and the service in which they are respectively employed; by which it appeared that there were 5 frigates of 44 guns, 3 of 36, 5 of 32, and 1 schooner of 12 guns—of which 5 frigates were dismantled and laid up in ordinary at the city of Washington.

The *sailing orders* given to the commanders of the frigate *Insurgent*, and the brigantine *Pickering*, with the opinion of the secretary of the navy that, as no information had been received of the fate of those vessels, they were probably lost in an equinoctial gale.

A report respecting the state of the *navy fund*, by which it appeared, that since the 29th of November 1800, the sum of 54,878 51-100 dollars, accruing to the United States from the sales of prizes, had been applied to the purchase of stocks of the funded debt of the United States, which, together with all those stocks previously purchased, are placed on the books of the treasury to the credit of the commissioners. These stocks produce an annuity of 5,688 44-100 dollars.—The gross amount of interest and dividends accruing from the time when they were purchased to the end of the present year, is 5,237 69-100 dollars.

That the pensions of the persons placed on the invalid list of the naval establishment, amount to an annual sum of 1,604 30-100 dollars, and that the aggregate of all those which either have been paid, or are payable to the end of the year 1801, amounts to the sum of 1,730 28-100 dollars, which deducted from the gross amount of interest and dividends as above, will leave a balance unapplied of 3,507 41-100 dollars.

With these measures terminated the first session of the seventh congress. The change, recently effected in the organs of the public will, had excited an unusual interest among the people. From the new rulers, much was expected on the one side, and much apprehended on the other. In the opinion of some the millenium had arrived, while the imaginations of others were awfully alarmed with the forebodings of scenes of anarchy and injustice. Both these descriptions of men have been disappointed. The golden age has not returned, neither is the land deluged with blood. The ordinary concerns of life proceed in their usual channels; and it is found that there is a stability in the national sentiment that remains unmoved by the inflammatory passions of a few disordered minds. In other countries and different periods of society, governments have moulded nations at pleasure, but here public men and public measures may change, while the nation remains the same. In this inflexibility of national will, the intelligent mind will discern the impregnable basis of liberty, and derive from it the firmest convictions of its duration.

The leading motive, to which the interesting measures of the session are to be traced, merits distinct, however rapid, notice.

The conviction that the general government, being federal in its character, should in the application of its powers, be confined to federal objects, dictated a system of rigid œconomy in the public expenditure, and of limited taxation. It was wisely conceived that the general welfare depended equally upon the vigor of state and federal sovereignty; and it was known that this end could only be insured, by leaving to the states certain sources of revenue untouched. Hence the repeal of the internal taxes, and the lopping off all useless ramifications of office.

The same motive, mingled with others, recommended the restoration of the old judiciary system, which had been formed, under federal auspices, before the rage or party, and without reference to political effects; and the general satisfaction it had given was a pledge of its being acceptable.

The same motive imparted much strength to the conviction of the necessity of redeeming, at the earliest day, without oppressing the people, the whole of the national debt. Accordingly about two-thirds of the annual revenue was appropriated to its discharge.

These are the three great measures which will illustrate this epoch of American affairs. Others of secondary character will be remembered for the temporary good produced; but the former will not for ages be forgotten. The ba-