
OBSERVATIONS, &c.

MANKIND may amuse themselves with theoretic systems of liberty, and trace its social and moral effects on sciences, virtue, industry, and every improvement of which the human mind is capable; but we can only discern its true value by the practical and wretched effects of slavery; and thus dreadfully will they be realized when the inhabitants of the Eastern States are dragging out a miserable existence *only* on the gleanings of their fields; and the Southern, blessed with a softer and more fertile climate, are languishing in hopeless poverty; and when asked, what is become of the flower of their crop, and the rich produce of their farms—they may answer in the hapless stile of the Man of *La Mancha*—“The steward of my Lord has seized and sent it to *Madrid*.”—Or, in the moral literal language of truth—the *exigencies* of government require, that the collectors of the revenue should transmit it to the *Federal City*.

Animated with the firmest zeal for the interest of this country, the peace and union of the American States, and the freedom and happiness of a people who have made the most costly sacrifices in the cause of liberty—who have braved the power of Britain, weathered the convulsions of war, and waded through the blood of friends and foes to establish their independence, and to support the freedom of the human mind, I cannot silently witness this degradation without calling on them, before they are compelled to blush at their own servitude, and to turn back their languid eyes on their lost liberties—to consider, that the character of nations generally changes at the moment of revolution. And when patriotism is discountenanced, and public virtue becomes the ridicule of the sycophant—when every man of liberality, firmness, and penetration, who cannot lick the hand stretched out to oppress, is deemed an enemy to the State—then is the gulph of despotism set open, and the grades to slavery, though rapid,
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tive, the circumscribing the votes to only ten electors in this state, and the same proportion in all the others, is nearly tantamount to the exclusion of the voice of the people in the choice of their first magistrate. It is vesting the choice solely in an aristocratic junto, who may easily combine in each state to place at the head of the union the most convenient instrument for despotic sway.

13. A senate chosen for six years, will in most instances, be an appointment for life, as the influence of such a body over the minds of the people, will be coeval to the extensive powers with which they are vested, and they will not only forget, but be forgotten by their constituents; a branch of the supreme legislature thus set beyond all responsibility, is totally repugnant to every principle of a free government.

14. There is no provision by a bill of rights to guard against the dangerous encroachments of power in too many instances to be named: But I cannot pass over in silence the insecurity in which we are left with regard to warrants unsupported by evidence—the daring experiment of granting *writs of assistance* in a former arbitrary administration is not yet forgotten in the Massachusetts; nor can we be so ungrateful to the memory of the patriots who counteracted their operation, as so soon after their manly exertions to save us from such a detestable instrument of arbitrary power, to subject ourselves to the insolence of any petty revenue officer to enter our houses, search, insult, and seize at pleasure. We are told by a gentleman of too much virtue and real probity to suspect he has a design to deceive—“that the whole constitution is a declaration of rights,”—but mankind must think for themselves, and to many very judicious and discerning characters, the whole constitution, with very few exceptions, appears a perversion of the rights of particular states, and of private citizens—But the gentleman goes on to tell us, “that the primary object is the general government, and that the rights of individuals are only incidentally mentioned, and that there was a clear impropriety in being very particular about them.” But, asking pardon for dissenting from such respectable authority, who has been led into several mistakes, more from his predilection in favour of certain modes of governments, than from a want of understanding or veracity, the rights of individuals ought to be the primary object of all government, and cannot be too securely guarded

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ed by the most explicit declarations in their favour. This has been the opinion of the Hampdens, the Pym, and many other illustrious names, that have stood forth in the defence of English liberties; and even the Italian master of politics, the subtil and renowned Machiavel acknowledges, that no republic ever yet stood on a stable foundation without satisfying the common people,

15. The difficulty, if not impracticability, of exercising the equal and equitable powers of government by a single legislature over an extent of territory that reaches from the Mississippi to the western lakes, and from them to the Atlantic ocean, is an insuperable objection to the adoption of the new system.—Mr. Hutchinson, the great champion for arbitrary power, in the multitude of his machinations to subvert the liberties of this country, was obliged to acknowledge in one of his letters, that “from the extent of country from north to south, the scheme of one government was impracticable.” But if the authors of the present visionary project, can by the arts of deception, precipitation and address, obtain a majority of suffrages in the conventions of the states to try the hazardous experiment, they may then make the same inglorious boast with this insidious politician, who may perhaps be their model, that “the union of the colonies was pretty well broken, and that he hoped never to see it renewed.”

16. It is an indisputed fact, that not one legislature in the United States had the most distant idea when they first appointed members for a convention, entirely commercial, or when they afterwards authorized them to consider on some amendments of the federal union, that they would, without any warrant from their constituents, presume on so bold and daring a stride, as ultimately to destroy the state governments, and offer a *consolidated system*, irreversible but on conditions that the smallest degree of penetration must discover to be impracticable.

17. The first appearance of the article which declares the ratification of nine states sufficient for the establishment of the new system, wears the face of dissention, is a subversion of the union of the confederated states, and tends to the introduction of anarchy and civil convulsions,—and may be a means of involving the whole country in blood.

18. The mode in which this constitution is recommended to the people to judge without either the advice of Congress,