

SIR:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, *December 17, 1818.*

By direction of the President, I have the honor to request you to cause the sum of \$1,500 to be paid to Mr. Wirt, Attorney General of the United States, for his late services in the circuit court of the United States at Baltimore, as additional counsel to the district attorney in certain criminal prosecutions at the suit of the United States, to be taken out of the fund usual in such cases.

I am, with great respect, sir, your obedient and very humble servant,

J. Q. ADAMS.

WILLIAM H. CRAWFORD, Esq., *Secretary of the Treasury.*TREASURY DEPARTMENT, COMPTROLLER'S OFFICE, *December 26, 1818.*

DR.

Wm. Wirt, Attorney General, to the United States.

To Treasury warrants for amount of the following issued in his favor, viz.

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|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|----------------|
| No. 336, dated 18th December, 1818, | - | - | - | - | - | 950 |
| No. 348, dated 21st December, 1818, | - | - | - | - | - | 550 |
| | | | | | | <u>\$1,500</u> |

CR.

By amount allowed to him by direction of the President, (agreeably to the letter of the Secretary of State, herewith, dated December 17, 1818,) "for his late services in the circuit court of the United States at Baltimore, as additional counsel to the district attorney in certain criminal prosecutions at the suit of the United States,"

\$1,500AUDITOR'S OFFICE, *December 24, 1818.*

WM. PARKER.

16th CONGRESS.]

No. 470.

[1st SESSION.

PROHIBITION OF SLAVERY IN NEW STATES.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, DECEMBER 15, 1819.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled: The memorial and remonstrance of the American convention for promoting the abolition of slavery, &c., held at Philadelphia, October 5, 1819, respectfully sheweth:

That, strongly impressed with apprehensions of the evil consequences which inevitably must result to the United States by enlarging the sphere and protracting the duration of domestic slavery, your memorialists deem it their duty respectfully to present this remonstrance against the admission into the Union of any new States which may hereafter be formed, unless on the conditions that the further introduction of slavery therein be prohibited, and that the duration of slavery therein be confined to those who shall be held in such bondage at the time of their admission.

Principles of plain and acknowledged justice may sometimes have been suspended or overruled, from a belief of state necessity. In the origin of political associations, mutual concessions are sometimes required, and an overruling public urgency suggests, while it regrets, the adoption of measures the danger of which is even partially anticipated.

Of this nature was the toleration of slavery in the formation of our present constitution.

But when no political urgency exists, when no necessary concession to circumstances is required, when the General Legislature has the power to lay down the principles of admission into the Union, as broad and pure as truth and justice themselves, it is hoped an occasion so noble will not be suffered to pass unimproved.

It is obvious that the voluntary toleration of slavery in those additions of territory which are made to us by the steady and gradual increase of population would not only afford an argument that the people of the United States feel no repugnance to it in principle, and thereby subject us to the charge of inconsistency in the eyes of mankind, but would also yield an encouragement to the continuance of that odious traffic pursued only by the basest of men, to whom a new and extensive market will thus be opened; and it is much to be feared that the utmost vigilance will render it impossible to prevent it. The certain effect will be greatly to increase the number of slaves beyond their gradual augmentation by birth. The love of ease is natural to mankind, and the owner of landed estate will take every opportunity of acquiring by purchase those whose forced labor will diminish the necessity of his own. The price of these unhappy beings will then be raised, the pecuniary attractions of this inhuman traffic will be increased, and the baseness of the motives which originally suggested it will presume to shelter itself under the false pretext of national sanction.

If the market will thus be enlarged, it will also be perpetuated, or at least continued for an almost indefinite duration. What is allowed to one new State will be claimed by the next that is formed as a sort of right, and the hydra of slavery will in time extend its reprobated form from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

No power, however carefully conceived or faithfully executed, will be able to arrest the progress of this illegal increase. No compensation can ever be made to the additional multitudes who will thus be doomed to suffering and sorrow, and no political ablution can ever efface this voluntary stain from our national character.

Nor can any countervailing benefit be suggested to meet these evils. If the population of our western wilds should proceed more slowly by the exclusion of slavery, is rapidity evidence of strength and firmness? And will not an industrious, hardy yeomanry, accustomed to till their own fields and perform their own labors, be more valuable additions to our strength than the enervated dependants on the labor of others? Your memorialists appeal, with respect and confidence, to the acknowledgments of distinguished men among the southern planters, that slavery is in this respect, as in many others, a sensible and serious evil, which they lament the more because they conceive that it cannot be remedied.

Why should it be introduced again without necessity, to effect an injury to ourselves, which, in a short time, will become too deeply rooted to be removed?

Your memorialists forbear to trespass further on your time. The subject is of awful importance. It is closely connected with the future destinies of our country. The convenience and cupidity of the western settler are alone arrayed against the consistency of our public conduct, the happiness and greatness of the nation. If their erroneous wishes be consulted in the arrangements that shall be made, the day may not be very distant when the assent of our Legislature will be deplored as the cause of incurable regret by those who now so earnestly solicit it.

But between motives of mistaken local interest on one side, and the high consideration of national character, public stability, and acknowledged justice, on the other, it is most respectfully hoped that Congress will not be at a loss to decide.

Signed by order:

RICHARD PETERS, JUN., *President.*

16th CONGRESS.]

No. 471.

[1st SESSION.]

PUBLICATION OF THE JOURNAL, ACTS, AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, DECEMBER 20, 1819.

WASHINGTON, December 17, 1819.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:

In compliance with a resolution of Congress of 27th March, 1818, the journal, acts, and proceedings of the convention which formed the present constitution of the United States have been published. The resolution directs that one thousand copies should be printed, of which one copy should be furnished to each member of the fifteenth Congress, and the residue to be subject to the future disposition of Congress. The number of copies sufficient to supply the members of the late Congress having been reserved for that purpose, the remainder are now deposited at the Department of State, subject to the order of Congress. The documents mentioned in the resolution of the 27th March, 1818, are in the process of publication.

JAMES MONROE.

16th CONGRESS.]

No. 472.

[1st SESSION.]

UNIFORM SYSTEM OF BANKRUPTCY.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE, DECEMBER 27, 1819.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled: The memorial of the merchants and traders of the town of Boston, and of other towns within the State of Massachusetts:

The wise framers of our excellent constitution, foreseeing the necessity in a maritime community of laws peculiarly affecting commercial relations, caused, upon due deliberation, the power of establishing "uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies" to be among those expressly delegated by the people to their representatives in Congress assembled. Several of our sister States, at the time they became members of the confederated republic, did not hesitate to declare freedom from imprisonment for debt, except when there might be a violent presumption of fraud, an inherent and constitutional right; and many others, when the creative power thus vested in the General Government has been suffered to lie dormant, have from time to time expressed, by their numerous insolvent laws or acts of private relief, a strong sense of the propriety of measures mitigating the common execution of the law. But, without enumerating the multiform declarations of State Legislatures to this effect, it is enough if no one will deny that the greatest possible exemption from personal restraint bears the closest analogy to the common sentiments and habits of Americans, and is highly congenial to that pure and equal spirit of liberty which animates our whole civil and political character.