

gle acre, and suppose in the collisions of party strife, they should think proper to exercise this monstrous power, is it not a natural consequence, that we must fall a victim to such a course of policy? We may think this state of affairs will never happen, and indeed there is not much danger so long as the Union shall move along harmoniously, but by the attacks lately made upon it, it is not very easy to predict what may happen, or rather what may not happen; would it not be better then, for us to provide against the effects of the exercise of this unhallowed, power by asking the government to furnish us a feeble preventative, so far at least, as that of giving settlement donations, to a small amount, may operate towards it. I see in looking over the statement made by a certain benevolent society, who have made it their business to examine into the number of those imprisoned for debt in the United States, that it is computed at about fifty thousand annually; now would it not be better, and is it not due to those unfortunate people to give them an opportunity of bettering their condition, by granting to them a small portion of land, which without some such provision may, and will remain waste and uncultivated for centuries yet to come? and is it not due to the new States, to furnish them the means of gradually populating their territories, either in that, or some other way, whereby they may in some time within the circle of numerical powers, be released from their present state of vassalage to the Federal Government? Another strong point in this case will be found in the fact, that there is not a nation, empire, kingdom, or government under Heaven, that pretends to ask any such price for their lands as the United States. No State in the Union has ever made a matter of speculation of their public lands. They have been disposed of for what would pay the expense of securing the titles to individual purchasers. In Canada, lands are given away to actual settlers, and something with them. In Russia the lands are given away by that empire, and in some instances exempted from taxation. The Persian empire, one of the oldest governments in the world, is this day offering lands "adapted to corn, wheat, barley, and oats, to settlers who will take them;" and shall we who proclaim to the world, that our government, and ours alone, is founded in principles of eternal justice, and "that all men are by nature, free and equal;" shall we only withhold from our fellow man, and fellow-citizen, that portion of his mother earth, which is necessary for his subsistence unless he will pay us for it, an extravagant price. This is becoming a matter of some serious concern too. Mexico is giving away, even to foreigners, who will take them, her best lands in Texas, and thousands are emigrating from this country to that, whereby we are losing a large amount of our hardy & valuable population, and the evil will increase, unless it is met by a counter operation in our own government.

I see that two vessels which sailed from New Orleans, within a few days carried out to that place two hundred emigrants; and it will be found on examination, that the policy of holding up the lands from actual settlers, has its origin in a dread of the old States to part with their heretofore controlling political power, much more than in any desire they have to impose pecuniary burdens upon their fellow citizens of the United States.

The present Administration being opposed to the improvement of the country, with the funds of the General Government, the president has proposed a substitute, by distributing the surplus funds among the several States, according to the ratio of representation, after the payment of the public debt. To this proposition there are various objections, and some which I conceive to be insurmountable.

In the first place, if there can be one solitary argument against the system, upon constitutional grounds, this proposition of the President's involves every objectionable point in the argument. The great objection made to the prosecution of the system of internal improvements is that the objects of the appropriations "are local, not national," and yet this proposition goes to give the national funds to the individual States, to be applied entirely to objects such as the States may select, whether local or national. Now what possible difference can there be, whether the General Government apply the funds directly to objects local in themselves, or give them to the States to do so? What difference whether I murder an individual myself, or employ an assassin to do it? Where is the authority found in the Constitution, to bestow the funds of the General Government upon the individual States? Could not such a fund, in the hands of a corrupt Administration, be used to seduce the States from their allegiance to the Union, in favour of him who might hold in his hand the executive power? Is it to be presumed that the

disconnected efforts of the States, would be at all calculated to secure success in the prosecution of a great system of National improvement? To guarantee success, however, the President proposes that "Congress should control the application of the funds, if it should be thought necessary." Now in the first place, who is to judge of this necessity? Congress of course, and if Congress are to control the application of the funds, why not do it directly, and not thus indirectly? If the States are to have them, give them to them—not thus lay the ground work of endless broils and conflicts between them and the General Government. We have a pretty good data upon which to found a calculation of the success of the proposed system, in observing the manner of the application of the three per cent. fund in our own State; and what is truly unfortunate, this great National plan of internal improvement, the only one suggested by our venerable Chief Magistrate to which numberless constitutional scruples did not apply, had scarcely been conceived, before it received a paralytic blow in the House of Representatives. This great system was thought worthy of the consideration of a select committee. It was accordingly referred to one, composed of seven members—all friends of the present Administration except one, with Colonel Polk of Tennessee, a warm devoted personal and political friend of Gen. Jackson at their head, who made their report to the House, declaring it unconstitutional and inexpedient. And in order to enlighten the public mind in relation to it, they thought it necessary to print, at the public expense, many thousand copies of that report to be circulated among the people.

One strong objection to this mode of distribution, is to be found in the inequality of representation between the free and slave States. All who recollect the history of the times in which the Constitution was adopted, know, that nothing but a direct taxation, in proportion to the representation, (which was then the only permanent mode thought of,) could ever have induced the free States to yield to the compromise which allows three fifths of the slave population, to be added to that of the free, in the apportionment of representatives among the States. But such was the compromise, so that two millions and upwards of slaves now in the United States, will give the slave States, an additional number of thirty representatives in Congress over that of the free States, which constitutes more than a seventh part of the whole number of representatives from all the States. Hence it follows, that by this mode of distribution according to the representation, the slave States would receive a proportion of the National funds more than the free, equal to one seventh part of all that were distributed.

For example, in 1820, Pennsylvania had a free population of one million of souls, and Virginia six hundred thousand; the former has twenty-six representatives in Congress, and the latter twenty-two. Now suppose there were one million of dollars to be divided between those two States according to their representation, Virginia would receive for her six hundred thousand free whites, four hundred and fifty-eight thousand three hundred and thirty dollars, while Pennsylvania with a million and more of free whites, would receive but five hundred and forty-one thousand six hundred and seventy dollars: that is, with her additional population of four hundred thousand, she would receive only eighty-three thousand three hundred and forty dollars more than Virginia. Or to place the subject in another point of view, there are two hundred and thirteen members of Congress in the whole—the slave States are entitled to twenty-three, on account of their black population. Now suppose there were ten millions of dollars to be distributed, the slave States would receive one million one hundred and twenty-six thousand seven hundred and sixty dollars more in proportion to their free population than the free States. It seems to me then, if we were to adopt the President's plan of internal improvement, we should add to our lack of political strength, the folly of throwing away our moral power to be derived from the money. We should place the slave States in this favorable position; we have already given them more than a fifth of our political strength in consequence of their million and a half of slaves, and because we have done so, we are to give them besides a million and a half dollars. It would certainly be a good bargain for them, for they would be receiving a million and a half of dollars for the virtue of holding slaves. As we have laboured ineffectually for years to civilize the Indians, under such an arrangement as this, we should find our labour equally ineffectual in abolishing slavery, because we should be paying a million and a half dollars annually as a bribe for its continuation and augmentation. I cannot think my constituents, who have so

many of them left the land of their nativity and sought shelter in the wilderness from the baneful effects of slavery, will ever consent to adopt any measure that has for its end, such strong inducements to increase and perpetuate its horrors. Never will they consent to adopt any measure that holds out a bribe of a million and a half of dollars annually to their fellow citizens, to hold in bondage their fellow men. These indeed are a few and but a few of the evils attending this magnificent scheme of internal improvement.

In relation to the present administration, it is pretty generally known, and the arguments above used will pretty clearly demonstrate, that I differ with them in various points of policy. I can certainly have no personal feelings concerning this matter, for I have never had either a personal or political controversy with any of them, excepting it has been in contending for the rights of my constituents. I have tho't that great injustice has sometimes been done to them, and on those occasions, I have spoken freely. I think if any man living can speak impartially, in regard to them, or their course, I can. I never suffer myself to be carried away with passion, or biased by partialities. I have endeavored to cultivate a good understanding with all the heads of Departments; and notwithstanding I sometimes differed with them about my rights, I have always sought to avoid the conclusion that they were governed by bad motives. The best of men may differ, and the worst be governed by good intentions. Private pique, personal aggrandizement, and private ambition may, and often do, mar and vitiate the deliberations of our public councils, and I cannot avoid thinking, there are more or less of those sentiments mingling with them at this time. The wantonness of proscription, the recklessness of private character, and the remorselessness of denunciation, done on the part of the present, and suffered on that of the late administration, too plainly evince there was corruption in the one, or deep rooted, unwarrantable prejudice in the other. I am not disposed either to throw all the censure on the one, or entirely to acquit the other, but that there is something wrong at the head of this government, no one can doubt, when he sees the great functionaries, the two highest officers in it, endeavoring to tear each other to pieces.—I have allusion particularly to the unhappy controversy now carried on between Mr. Calhoun and Gen. Jackson.

It may be said by some who feel themselves deeply interested in sustaining the party, that it is not a matter which interests the public.—That is not so. The public character and conduct of these great men, are public property, and the public are deeply interested in whatever concerns their public lives. If John C. Calhoun, is the dark, insidious parasite that Gen. Jackson represents him to be, he ought to meet the reproach and reprehension of every honest man, and be discarded as totally unworthy the confidence of those who have elevated him to the dignified station he occupies. If Gen. Jackson is that malignant, vindictive tyrant that could smother in his bosom, for so long a time, the flames of malice and revenge against even a magnanimous enemy, who, from a sense of justice, or a desire to conciliate, had long since been led to acts of kindness, which ought to have secured his forgiveness, he would deserve the execration of every good man in the community—or if he be that weak imbecile dotard, that could be wrought upon by the crafty insinuations of an unprincipled favourite, to sacrifice the character, the honour, and hard earned fame of an honest man, for the bold, independent discharge of a high responsible duty to his country, because it happened to bear hard upon him, he ought not to be trusted with the power and authority attached to the office of President of the United States. One or the other is totally unfit for the station he occupies, and the public have a right to know which it is. And whatever may be my sentiments towards the present administration, I am certain that between these two men, I can form a very impartial judgment, for I do not profess to be the political friend of either, but however impartial I might be in the judgment which ought to be rendered between those distinguished individuals, justice would seem to demand a suspension of sentence until the whole case is laid before the public; and my object in presenting it at this time, is merely to give my fellow citizens a limited view of the grounds upon which the case stands at present, so far as it has been presented to public view. In 1818, General Jackson, in his contest with the Seminole Indians, which were then at war with the United States, drove them from our own territory into the Floridas, which then belonged to Spain. They took shelter under the Spanish forts, and General Jackson, to secure and complete his conquest, took the forts into his possession, after dispersing the Indians. This

was such an indignity to the Spanish government, as they thought worth noticing, and called upon the United States for redress, and required the punishment of the officer who had committed the supposed violation of their neutral rights. This led the President, (Mr. Monroe) to enquire into his conduct, and for that purpose convened his cabinet, of whom Mr. Calhoun was one, being then Secretary of War. The President, with his whole cabinet, except John Q. Adams, were of the opinion Gen. Jackson had done wrong, and so well were they established in this opinion, that Mr. Monroe wrote to Gen. Jackson to prepare the documents, in order to make his defence. Mr. Calhoun, among the rest, gave it as his opinion, that Gen. Jackson's conduct ought to be enquired into in some way or other. However the whole cabinet feeling very friendly toward Gen. Jackson for his distinguished public services, (and more particularly Mr. Adams,) they were much disposed to have the matter settled if they could without exposing or mortifying an able and deserving officer. Mr. Adams undertook his defence, and finally procured an amicable adjustment of the affair with the Spanish government, without bringing the question before a court martial.

Mr. Wm. H. Crawford took a pretty active part in this business, which came to the acknowledgment of Gen. Jackson, and for which, it is said, he threatened to cut off his ears. So the matter rested from the year 1819, until about a year ago, when somebody put into the hands of General Jackson, a letter of Mr. Crawford's, which showed the fact that Mr. Calhoun had proposed to have him court marshalled for his conduct in that affair. Mr. Calhoun had been the personal and political friend of the General for all the intervening time, and was identified with him in both the late elections for President and Vice President, but on getting hold of that letter of Mr. Crawford's, he called upon Mr. Calhoun, to know whether in fact he had been in favor of having his conduct inquired into on that occasion. Mr. Calhoun candidly confessed the fact, alleging that it was in the discharge of his duty as Secretary of War, and with the most friendly feelings toward him as a man and as an officer, who had rendered the most distinguished services to his country. Upon this acknowledgment, however, General Jackson discarded him from his friendship and declared him guilty of ingratitude and duplicity; that all correspondence should henceforth and forever cease. Thus the affair remained until a few weeks ago, when Mr. Calhoun, in order to acquit himself of those charges, published the correspondence to the world, and thus the matter stands at this time.

Thus we see the two highest officers in our Government criminating each other. The one with being guilty of ingratitude and duplicity.—The other with being weak, vindictive, and malignant. If they really be what they say of each other, we ought to know it, as it renders them unworthy our confidence, and of the honours we have conferred upon them. I have said this much on the subject, believing it to be one vitally affecting as well the honor and interest of the country, as the character and standing of those distinguished individuals, in order that justice may be done them by an impartial public.

There are other topics I should have been glad to notice before I closed this address; however before I do, I beg leave to ask of my friends on both sides of the great political questions which are now agitating the country, (for I have the consolation to believe I have some on both sides,) to ponder well what I have said to them in this letter; they are matters of great importance to us all; that those who think I am right in things and wrong in men, will not abandon principles for the sake of party; and those who believe me wrong in both, will do me the justice to believe, that if I err, it is an error of my head and not of my heart.

I am respectfully,

JOHN TEST.

N. B. Since writing the above, I have been called to perform the last melancholy duty I owed to my old faithful co-labourer in our country's service — The Hon James Noble. He departed this life on Saturday the 26th of February, 10 o'clock at night. The world will bear a willing testimony to the fidelity and assiduity with which he performed every public duty. The country has lost a most faithful servant whose labours were always well directed and honestly intended to promote its good; and while he was deservedly the favorite of the people whom he represented, and who deeply regret his loss, his numerous friends, of whom he was the idol, will never cease to recollect the cheerfulness and hilarity with which he inspired the private circle in which he moved.

I felt a great solicitude to obtain an appropriation for holding a treaty to extinguish the Indian title to some lands

within our State. But the Session being a short one, and much of the time consumed in the trial of Judge Peck, together with the feelings that are excited in consequence of the conduct of the Administration and the citizens of Georgia toward the Southern Indians, rendered it difficult to obtain appropriations for that purpose, or get up the bill out of its place, and it was not reached during the Session in regular order. The Departments likewise called upon, and obtained from Congress another appropriation of eighty thousand dollars in addition to the five hundred thousand appropriated last year for the removal of those Indians, which threw another obstacle in the way. The President, however, is authorised to hold the treaty if he is disposed to do so, and Mr. Eaton, the Secretary of War, gave me strong intimations last year, that he would do so, but his whole time was taken up in the South, and I must confess I have little hope of its being done this season.

For the Palladium.

Mr. Editor.—Having noticed in the 8th No. of the Palladium, a communication over the signature of A. J. Cotton, on the subject of the revenue laws of this state; I confess I was somewhat surprised at his notions of the ad valorem system of taxation.—But they are about in accordance with the notions of all who favor the system. They will raise the hue and cry against the present mode of taxation, and then with all the pretended solemnity of honest politicians, mount their popular hobby, (the ad valorem system of taxation;) the true spirit of which, with its tendencies, they do not understand, or conceal from the good people they wish to rouse from their lethargy. On first sight of Mr. Cotton's production, I thought some remark necessary; but the want of time & ability caused me to defer it.—But noticing another communication under the signature of Farmer, jr., in the 51st No. of the Statesman, and as there has been so much harping on this subject, I have thought proper to submit this communication, not from any personal feelings except of the best kind—but from an honest difference of opinion, which will not lessen my friendship. I must however doubt his knowledge of the situation of Indiana, or if he does, it would seem he has not given the subject entered on that consideration it deserves. He quotes the laws of Maine, and says "that a just valuation of the real and personal property of each individual shall be made from time to time, and that each individual shall be taxed according to such valuation—money at interest not excepted." And now for the details of his law:

Lands, with the improvements thereon, horses and oxen are the subjects of taxation; and Farmer jr. embraces horses, oxen, houses, and lots. If these are separate writers, it shows how well the friends of what is called the ad valorem system agree in what ought to be subjects of taxation, under their hobby; but if the same, it shows that he forgets houses and lots in his former. Well, now let us take a view of the case—on whom does this law bear? On the industrious laboring class of community, or on the rich, with their thousands in their pockets, or vested otherwise, not coming within the pale of the law? This will not be difficult to determine. The industrious farmer, who, in all cases, is the principal pillar of all governments, feels its pressure. His lands with their improvement, acquired by strict application to industry, by night and day, the work of his own hands, because he has abstained from indolence and intemperate habits, and has improved his little farm in the best manner his circumstances will admit, are to be taxed for his industry. How inconsistent. What encouragement is there for a man to try to do well? None. The speculator may have his thousands in his pocket, and thousands of acres of land in an unimproved state, & it is valued accordingly. Hence the man with perhaps 10 or 50 acres of land, perhaps in debt to half its value, will pay a tax equal to the one last named, and thus pressed down with an insufferable burden of tax, he remains stationary, unable to purchase another foot of land, and the only horse or ox he has to aid in the cultivation of his little farm, must be valued, and if he has a house and lot it must be also valued; and what is gained by it? But it is against the towns principally that the clamor of the enemies of the present mode of taxation is directed. They have fine buildings, says they, and pay nothing for them. This is not the fact. That there are deficiencies in the present law I admit. But under existing circumstances, with some exceptions, it is certainly the best that can or will be adopted for many years to come, if ever. I question if the ad valorem system, so called, in its full extent will remedy the evil; and unless it is carried to its full extent, it is the most unjust system that can be adopted; and even then, the evils over balance the