FOR THE FEDERAL GAZETTE.

Messrs. Yundt & Brown,

An occasional attendance at fires in Baltimore has suggested some reflexions to me, which, if you choose, you may publish.

I understand that there are certain persons appointed as officers, distinguished by large staves, whose duty it is in an especial manner to direct the efforts of the people who gather promiscuously and in confusion at fires, to dispose them in the most advantageous situations, and to have the lines reregularly and promptly extended to the most convenient places for obtaining water.

I admit that these officers appear solicitous to do every thing in their power to suppress the fire; but they certainly mistake the plan. If, instead of bustling about in the croud immediately at the fire, which is their general practice, they would turn their attention to the parts of the lines which are most remote, and would make it their business to see that the lines extend completely to the water, they would do much more important service. When we meet with them in the croud, they do not hesitate to push us into the parts of the lines near the engines, which are always more than full—But as there seems to be something exhilirating in the appearance of a large fire, every person recedes from it with reluctance; and when it is necessary to turn a corner which will prevent them from seeing the grand effect of a building in flames, they will not do it without something like a mixture of persuasion and force. From this circumstance, one end of the line is generally defective. I would therefore propose that some of those gentlemen clothed with "a brief authority," should *station* themselves near the water, and cause the lines to be regularly extended and filled up; and I should think it not inexpedient that one or more of the officers should attach themselves to each line, to inspect the state of its different parts, and to support it as long as necessary.

From having noticed, on several occasions, a very reasonable reluctance to standing in the water to fill the buckets, and to handing them from the docks, which may both be considered as servile labors from which no honor or distinction arise, as to those who encounter the suffocating smoke with the hose, or with their axes scaling the partition-walls, cut away the burning timbers, and with irresistible force hurl the flaming fragments to the ground; I would recommend a handsome compensation to be made to a definite number of men, who could satisfy the person appointed to attend to it, that they had industriously and steadily aided in arresting a fire, by working at the pumps or standing in the water to fill buckets, or by getting the water from the docks and passing it upon the wharves. At the fire on Sunday night, we had formed a line tolerably well to the Falls, and had a heap of buckets at the water's edge; and twelve or fifteen of us stood round them, looking at each other, & asking each one his neighbor, why he did not fill the buckets. To effect it, somebody must have waded—the evening was cool—we were in a retired situation, where ambition could not be stimulated by the prospect of commendation, nor avarice or poverty by the hope of pecuniary reward. No explanation was made,—and in a few minutes, by general consent, we took up our empty buckets and walked back. Some one observed as he passed me, that he was willing to do any thing but stand in the water—He was apprehensive that would make him sick, and he knew nobody who would pay his doctor's bill.

DOCUMENTS

Accompanying a Message from the president of the United States—continued.

LETTER No. III.

Captain Sparks to the governor of the Missisippi territory.

FORT ADAMS, Sept. 7, 1805.

SIR,

I have the honor to forward you dispatches from captain Wilson, at Point Coupee. If it should be your wish to have the party therein referred to, taken to this place, to be delivered over to the civil authority, the command of one subaltern and twenty-five men I have sent from this post to reinforce captain Wilson, will be instructed to execute.

I am, &c.

(Signed) R. SPARKS,
Captain commandant.

His excellency Robert Williams, esq. governor of the Missisippi territory.

LETTER No. V.

The governor of the Missisippi territory, to captain Sparks, commanding at Fort Adams.

NATCHEZ, Sept. 9th, 1805,
10 o'clock at night.

SIR,

As I was starting from Washington to this place, I received your letter of the 7th inst. with a dispatch from captain Wilson.

My answer to captain Wilson I have sent open for your perusal, which I pray you to forward immediately.

I request that you will retain and safely keep under military authority the party that may be sent to you, agreeably to my directions to captain Wilson, until they are received by the civil authority. Accept my hearty approbation of your and captain Wilson's attention on this occasion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROBT. WILLIAMS.

Captain Richard Sparks, commanding at Fort Adams.

LETTER No. VI.

The governor of the Missisippi territory's orders to colonel Ellis of the 5th regiment of the militia of said territory.

HEAD-QUARTERS, WASHINGTON, M. T. Sept. 9th, 1805.

SIR,

You will on the receipt of this order immediately assemble from your regiment the following detachment for duty, viz. two captains, two lieuts. two ensigns, eight sergeants, eight corporals, two drummers or buglehornmen, and eighty-two privates to compose two equal companies. They are to be well armed, and supplied with 12 rounds of ammunition per man. Not having the state of your regiment by actual return, it must rest with yourself from which battalion you are to detach them. This detachment is to act as a patrol near and along the line of demarcation to prevent or check irregularities of every kind. They are to rendezvous at Pinckneyville, from whence they will be detached to their different posts. As soon as they are assembled a return of them will be made, naming the commissioned officers and reporting the strength, and the state of arms. &c. &c. and forwarded to the inspector at this place, when you will receive further orders. In the mean time the detachment will be active as patrols, examining all equivocal characters passing the line from below, and especially if by night, stopping and securing any armed parties, improperly passing the line, as in some late instances; and in short, affording all proper protection in their power to the citizens of the U. States and their property. The better to effect this, one captain and his command, will be detached to the eastern part of the line to be guarded, and take post on or near the Tiehfau, from whence the communication must be kept up to meet the patrol detached from the post near the west end of the line.

Every occurrence worthy of note can and must be communicated in this way to the senior captain whose post will be in or near Pinckneyville; and who will report either direct to head-quarters or to the inspector's office. Should any hostile attempt be made, either on the citizens, their property or the detachment on duty, force must be repelled with force.

(Signed) R. WILLIAMS.

John Ellis, esq. lieut. col. commanding the 5th regiment of militia.

Washington, September 23, 1805.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 20th instant, informing me of the arrival of the prisoners from Point Coupee, at Fort Adams.

I request that they may all be delivered over to judge Rodney, or some justice of the peace, to be examined as to any offences they may have committed within the limits of this territory, or that may be cognizable by the civil authority thereof.

The Spanish subjects to the number of six, as I am informed, should they be discharged by the civil authority, I request that you will cause them to be escorted by a sufficient guard, to the line dividing this territory from that possessed by his Catholic majesty, there liberated and suffered to pass into his jurisdiction.

As to the Kempers, I presume they will be dealt with as the law will authorize, and my hope is, that they may be bound to their good behavior, and to keep the peace as well towards the citizens of the United States as the subjects of his Catholic majesty.

Accept my best respects, &c.

(Signed) R. WILLIAMS.

Capt. Richard Sparks, military commandant at Fort Adams.

Washington, Sept. 23, 1805.

SIR,

Finding you had left this when I returned from Natchez, Mr. Shields follows with my orders to captain Sparks, commanding at the Fort. Enclosed is a copy of my letter to him, indicative of the wish of the executive of this territory on the occasion, which I trust will be compatible with the civil authority.

I am, &c.

(Signed) R. WILLIAMS.

Judge Rodney.

Town of Washington, Sept. 30, 1805.

DEAR SIR,

On the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth of this inst. I made examination into the truth of the outrage committed in this territory at and near Pinckneyville, on the night of the 3d of this inst. on the persons of Reuben, Nathan and Samuel Kemper. This outrage appears to have been committed by a combination of persons, some residing above and some below the line of demarkation. Among them was a doctor Borner, a Henry Flower, son of doctor Flower, and a Mr. M'Dermot, who were active above the line, and are said to reside below. The party, composed of twelve white men and seven negroes, first assaulted and broke the house of Nathan Kemper, and seized and tied him and his brother Reuben, then a part of them went to the house of Samuel Kemper, broke into his room and took and tied him, and the two parties met again near the line; and went in company on the high road till they got a few feet below the line where captain Alston, with a party of twelve men lay in wait and marched out of the bushes and took possession of the Kempers; at the instant all the other party dispersed, and ran off. Alston, and his party, then conducted the Kempers down to Bayou Tunica landing and put them on board of a boat and ordered six of his men, to wit, William Barker, Charles Stewart, John Morris, Jhn Ratcliff, Geo. Rowe and Adam Bingamin, to take them down to Baton Rouge. On their way down when they got opposite the American garrison at Point Coupee, the boat was taken by captain Wilson, the Kempers released, and the Spanish subjects made prisoners. It appearing on examination of the Kempers, that the six persons last mentioned, had not acted above the line, they were liberated as will appear by a document I inclose. None of the Spanish subjects that were active in the outrage above the line, were taken into custody; but if they had been in custody they would have been detained for trial. And indeed it would be evident that the party below the line were acting confederate with those above, had they not been the subject of a government in amity with us, the six persons discharged might have been legally detained, until due satisfaction was made. I was careful, however, to avoid anything that would in the least tend to violate the amity of the two nations, and therefore thought proper to liberate them. Though, I think our military officers fully justified in detaining them till legally discharged.

I am, respectfully, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS RODNEY.

P. S. Justice Baker was also directed to require bail of Reuben, Nathan & Samuel Kemper respectively, to keep the peace, especially towards the subjects of the king of Spain, and to do no injury to any one below the line of demarkation. T. R.

[*To be continued.*]

NINTH CONGRESS.

Debate on the motion of Dr. Logan, for leave to bring in a bill to suspend the commercial intercourse between the United States and St. Domingo.

[*Continued.*]

FRIDAY, DEC. 20.

Doctor Logan having assigned his reasons for asking permission to introduce the bill,

Mr. Adams said—

Mr. President—Had the gentleman who asks leave to introduce this bill, assigned any new reasons as the foundation of his motion, whatever my opinion might have been upon their merits, I should not think it proper to combat them at this time; but the object of the bill is so simple, that its details are immaterial. Its purpose is totally to prohibit a branch of our commerce, which at the last session of the legislature was proved to be of great importance to the country. Unless therefore, a majority of the senate should be of opinion that the bill ought to pass, it appears to me that the present is the stage at which it ought to be arrested; since the mere discussion of the question & pendency of the measure before congress, may have an unfavorable effect upon the commercial interest, or at least injuriously affect individual merchants in the course of their affairs.

It is well known to every member upon this floor, and to the public in general, that the same gentleman who now wishes to introduce this bill, did at the last session of congress make a motion for leave to bring it in at that time, which was rejected; & I expected that on its renewal at this time, he would have alledged some new grounds for the measure; but in this expectation I have been disappointed—He tells us indeed that unless we do prohibit this commerce, it will inevitably lead us into a war with the French republic; I have certainly no more disposition than any gentleman here to be at war with the French republic; but excepting the gentleman's assertion (to which I am willing to give all the credit which it can be entitled to) what particle of evidence have we that the St. Domingo trade will expose us to any such danger?—What evidence has the gentleman himself alledged in support of his assertion? Why sir, he has read to us a part of the President's message, at the opening of the *last* session of congress; and a correspondence between the British and French ministers, and the secretary of state, six or nine months previous to that time, and complaining that some of our merchant vessels were armed—It is surely needless for me to mention in this house, that in consequence of that very passage in the president's message of last year, and of those very complaints of those foreign ministers, a bill did actually pass both houses of congress, after a long and ample discussion of the subject; which bill was intended to remove those causes of complaint, and is now in force. This bill I have understood was satisfactory on all hands, and it has been within a very few days declared by a member of this body, in his place, to have given satisfaction to the French government in particular, nor has that information been contradicted. This conclusion indeed may be inferred from the tenor of the president's communication to congress at the commencement of the *present* session. If any intimation of complaints from foreign powers relative to this subject, is contained in this message, it has escaped my attention, and I can indeed safely affirm there is none—and is not this silence itself, a strong, an irresistable proof that no such complaints have been made; but that the measures adopted by congress at the last session have been satisfactory? Believing it as I do, and that no needless interference of the government with the regular course of commercial transactions ought ever to be countenanced, I hope the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Dr. Logan) will not have leave to bring in this bill.

General Jackson seconded Dr. Logan's motion, and in reply to Mr. Adams said, that he wished the Doctor to make it an annual motion, as Mr. Sawbridge had in the parliament of England, to reduce septennial parliaments, but with more effect, until the trade so highly dishonorable to national character was annihilated. As to Mr. Adam's observations that the bill was not allowed to be brought in last session, and that he had heard no new arguments, he would answer the gentleman by asking what new arguments had been advanced on the bill to prohibit the importation of slaves, where leave was given two days since to bring in the bill, and the same arguments had been rung in our years by Quakers and others, ever since the constitution had been in operation and not a new one had been produced. He said that the day would come when this dishonorable traffic would be rued by the United States—that day must arrive when a general peace would take place, when the present hostilities must cease; that it must and would then become the interest of every nation of Europe, having colonies in the West-Indies, to extirpate this horde, or ship them off to some other place. That the United States by affording them succor, arms, ammunition and provisions, must be considered by them as their allies—their supporters and their protectors. That he believed the United States would be viewed in this light by the French government & by themselves, and that they would demand and expect us to grant them an asylum as allies and protectors, and send them to our coast. This was no novelty and he had received information from a late celebrated French general, given in a public company at the city of Washington where he boarded, and the general was one who dined there; that arrangements had been made, if general Le Clerc had been victorious, to send those brigands to the southern states. This was a melancholy subject for South-Carolina and Georgia, and one of those brigands introduced into the southern states, was worse than an hundred importations of blacks from Africa, and more dangerous to the United States.

[*To be continued.*]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, December 30.

Mr. John C. Smith, from the committee of claims, made a report on the petition of William Brenk, jun. in favor of the petitioner, which was referred to a committee of the whole on Tuesday.

Mr. Gregg observed, that considerable difficulties had arisen in surveying the lands in Louisiana, owing to omissions in the law passed by the last congress, and that the committee on public lands had received a letter from the secretary of the treasury, representing these circumstances, and stating the necessity of legislative interposition. Mr. Gregg having read this letter, asked in the name of the committee, and obtained leave to present a bill extending the powers of the surveyor-general to the territory of Louisiana, and for other purposes.

The bill was read and referred to a committee of the whole.

Mr. Otis delivered a message from the senate, stating that they had passed a bill to regulate the laying out and making a road from Cumberland, on the Potomac, to the river Ohio, in the state of Ohio; and that they had likewise passed a bill which originated in the house, entitled, an act supplementary to the act making provision for the payment of claims under the French convention, with amendments.

The amendments to the last bill are entirely verbal, and the house immediately concurred therein.

On motion,

Resolved, That the committee of commerce and manufactures be instructed to enquire into the expediency of erecting the town of Darien into a port of entry.

A bill to provide for light-houses in Long-Island sound, and to declare Roxbury, in the state of Massachusetts, to be a port of delivery, was read a third time and passed.

The bill from the senate, to regulate the laying out and making a road from Cumberland on the Potomac, to the river Ohio, in the state of Ohio, was read and referred to a committee of the whole on Thursday.

This bill authorises the president of the United States to appoint three commissioners to lay out a road from Cumberland, on the Potomac, to the river Ohio, in the state of Ohio, to be four rods in width. The commissioners are directed to make a report to the president of their proceedings, as well as the expence of making the road passable. The president is authorised to accept or reject the report, in whole or in part. If he shall accept it, he is then authorised to obtain the consent of the states through which the road may pass; and, having obtrained such consent, to make a turnpike. Fifty thousand dollars are appropriated, payable first out of the proceeds of the reservation from the sale of lands in Ohio, and secondly, out of the treasury of the United States; the last sum to be chargeable to the preceding fund.

On motion of Mr. J. C. Smith, the house went into a committee of the whole, on the report of the committee of claims on the petition of Return J. Meigs, in favor of allowing the governor, judges and secretary of the government of the territory N. W. of the Ohio, compensation for services performed between the adoption of a constitution by the state of Ohio, and the meeting of the legislature under that constitution.

A question arose whether those officers should be compensated by the U. S. or by the state of Ohio.

On this question a cons[illegible] debate arose—Messrs. J. C. Smith, Morrow, Bidwell, Sloan, Jackson and Dana supporting—and Messrs. Stanford, Smilie, J Clay & Alston opposing the report.

Mr. J. Clay moved that the committee should rise and ask leave to sit again, that further time might be allowed to consider the subject; which motion having been negatived—ayes 39—noes 56. Messrs. J. Clay and Smilie again spoke against agreeing to the report.

When on motion of Mr. J. C. Smith, the committee rose and asked leave to sit again, which the house granted.

On motion of Mr. Jackson, the committee appointed on laying out certain roads, &c. were discharged therefrom, in consideration of the bill received from the senate, and the resolution relative thereto referred to the commitee of the whole, to whom the bill from the senate is referred.

Tuesday, December 31.

The consideration of Mr. Sloan's resolution to lay a tax on slaves imported into the U. States, was postponed till Monday next.

A message was received from the president of the United States, giving the information requested by them relative to the discharge of state balances, and representing that New-York is the only state that has discharged any part of the reported balances, and that she has in consequence been allowed a credit of 222 810 dollars on the books of the treasury.

Referred to the committee of the whole on the state of the union.

Mr. Nelson presented a petition from sundry citizens of Washington, praying for authority to make a road from 14th, street west, to the Frederick-town road; which was referred to a committee of three members.

Mr. J. C. Smith, from the committee of claims, made an unfavorable report on the petition of Sylvano Catalona—whereupon,

Resolved, that the petitioner have leave to withdraw his petition,

Mr. Elliot moved the following resolution:

Resolved, That it is expedient to provide by law for fitting and repairing—Navy yards belonging to the United States on or near the shores of the Atlantic ocean for the reception of the ships and vessels of war of the United States.

Referred to the select committee on that part of the president's message which relates to the making provision for the better defence of our ports and harbors, &c.

Mr. Crowninshield from the committee of commerce and manufactures, made an unfavorable report on the petition of John Dorr—Whereupon,

Resolved, That the petitioner have leave to withdraw his petition.

Mr. J. Clay presented a petition from Oliver Evans, praying an extension of the time of his patent for an improvement in the making flour; and representing his having made, at great expence, very important improvements on steam engines, and making a similar request with regard to them.

Referred to a select committee of five members.

Mr. Gregg from the committee on public lands, made an unfavorable report on the petition of John M'Entire, which was referred to a committee of the wole on Monday.

A message was received from the president representing that he had signed the act extending the time for the payment of claims under the Louisiana convention.

A committee was appointed to enquire into the expediency of making further provision for the faithful performance of the duties of marshals.

On motion of Mr. Crowninshield, the committee of commerce and manufactures were discharged from the petition of Francis Massoneer, which was referred to the committee on public lands.

Mr. Findley observing that he had a confidential communication to make, the galleries were cleared about 1 o'clock. At half after one they were again opened—

When further debate arose on the report of the committee of claims in the case of return J. Meigs.

Messrs. Stanford and J. Clay, spoke against the report; and Mr. G. W. campbell in favor of it.

On concurring in the report of the committee of claims, there were—Ayes 67—carried.

Whereupon the resolution was referred to the committee of claims to bring in a bill.

Committee appointed in the house of Representatives.

Committee on a message of the president respecting the public buildings at Washington—Messrs. Nelson, Jones, Margruder, Lewis, and Hastings.

MESSAGE

From the president of tre United States, transmitting a report from the governor and presiding judge of the territory of Michigan, relative to the state of that territory.

To the senate and house of representatives of the United States.

The governor and presiding judge of the territory of Michigan, have made a report to me of the state of that territory, several matters in which being within the reach of the legislative authority only, I lay the report before congress.

TH: JEFFERSON.

December 23, 1805.