

To the Citizens of Maryland,

THE preparation and adoption of the constitution of the United States, was not, in fact, the work of a party. It was more properly that of Gen. Washington himself, and of other persons of eminent talents and acknowledged patriotism, who believed, perhaps justly, that the states could not long be held together by any kind of mere confederation, and who, when the plan of the government was completed, were persuaded that if it was rejected, another with as few defects, would never be obtained. With these were joined the aspiring individuals already mentioned, who, in preparation for the crisis, had been forming such a party as they could, to support whatever they might themselves find it their interest to advocate. Of this same party, already described, the virtuous Washington and his associates, however they might detest those who composed it, were obliged to avail themselves, for the purpose of effecting what they deemed a public benefit.— Their votes were as good as the best; and they were kept in some degree, out of sight, by the forward zeal of all those persons of real worth who happened, in the different states, to be in favour of the ratification. Among these, it is to be observed, that the men of exorbitant wealth were, for the most part, to be found.— No wonder, then, that the federal party should have piqued itself on its respectability; and respectable it might have been, if it could have got rid of the poisonous mixture with which it was originally infused. But the Tories and unprincipled speculators, who had been permitted to share in the triumph over the anti-federalists, were not to be shaken off. Their numbers and influence increased: that influence was perceived in some of the early measures of the government; and this gave rise to a new party, whose object was the preservation of republican principles, and that simplicity in the management of public affairs which appeared more suitable to a nation in the infancy of its existence, than an eager imitation of the mysterious and corrupt systems of the European governments. The appearance of this party was no sooner perceived, than a vigorous war, of offence as well as defence, was commenced against it, and directed principally by the arch juggler, as on a certain occasion he very properly called himself, Mr. Secretary Hamilton, the father of the funding system, the internal tax system, and all the other systems that in so short a time have made us familiar with speculations, usuries and oppressions, such as, even in the slavish state of colonization, we had scarcely heard of.— The conduct of the French minister Genet, about this time, furnished a good opportunity to the federalists, to stigmatize the opposition as a French party. In this cry, their old corps-de-reserve, the Tories, joined with redoubled alacrity, and became by their zeal in denouncing the republicans more than ever incorporated with the prevailing party. The friends of liberty, however, not regretting these accusations, kept a watchful eye upon the measures of the government, the views of which became by degrees fully developed; and they waited for the time when the evil should have reached the understandings and feelings of the community, to stop the progress of those alarming strides which they perceived to be making towards the corruption and tyranny of the old world. It is not for an individual to say, positively, how far the President Washington was deemed by the republicans to be implicated in the faults which they ascribed to the administration, and to the federal majority in Congress. This is the mighty difficulty which the federalists have always thrown in our way: The name of the illustrious Washington is the screen behind which they shelter their political deformities. Was General Washington, say these gentry, the contriver of schemes to abridge our liberty, and endanger our independence? Even the Tories, with their British pensions in their pockets, have the assurance to put questions of this sort. I am

ready for one to answer the enquiry. I am willing to say, not only that Gen. Washington never entertained a thought that did not tend to the honour and advantage of his country, but that he was less liable to be mistaken in the means adapted to that end, than any other person in it. His sagacity was as unquestionable as his patriotism: As a man, his judgment was necessarily fallible, and that was all: but I want proof that he was able to direct or control the measures of the government, and that he is responsible for those which in the end excited the indignation of the people, and effected the downfall of the federal party. It is true that he was jealous of the French influence in this country, and laboured to keep within bounds the predilection which was shewn for that nation in the commencement of its revolution: but it is equally true, that he was jealous also of English influence, although the operations of the latter being more secret and insidious, his efforts to counteract it were not so apparent as those with which he opposed the direct and open attempts of the French minister to enlist the partialities of the Americans in the cause of the new republic. I do not believe it to have been General Washington's contrivance that Mr. Munroe was sent to France to amuse and deceive the government of that country, while Mr. Jay was negotiating a treaty with England, derogatory to our existing engagements with the other power, and recalled with contumely as soon as he boggled at a total sacrifice of his personal honour in that undertaking. It is in proof, that General Washington signed that treaty with great reluctance, and that he never would have done it, but for Edmund Randolph's collusion, real or supposed, with the minister Fauchet. The discovery of that slight and officious man's correspondence with the successor of Genet, gave an advantage to the advocates of the treaty, which they improved with complete success. The sincere heart of the President was shocked at the apparent infidelity of his confidential officer. He believed himself betrayed and sold by the unlucky secretary, and other unseen conspirators; and "perplexed in the extreme," he yielded to the incessant instances which were made to him, to give an effectual check to French influence, by confirming a treaty, which not only precluded all possibility of new engagements with France, but violated, or at the best, deprived of all effect, those which were already existing. I believe that General Washington was compelled in like manner, by artful advantages taken of particular circumstances and conjunctures, to give his official sanction to many other things which his judgment did not approve; I believe that Hamilton, and Jay, and Pickering, with other high-toned federalists, in and out of office, planned and effected those measures against the will of the President: I believe that these men, in their sentiments, leaned towards a stronger kind of government than they dared openly to recommend; and that they would rather have tied the country to England, upon any terms, than have incurred the smallest risk of a connection with France. I believe that General Washington's desire for retirement was very sincere; but I am persuaded that, for the sake of the country, he would have remained in office if he could have had his just share of influence; and if the inclination of Mr. Adams to get a step higher, had not been seconded by some of the federalists, who thought they could manage that gentleman better than the General.— So much for the opinion of one democrat upon this Gordian knot of federalism. But Washington, it has often been alleged, declared his approbation of his successor's administration, thus giving his sanction to federal measures after he had discharged himself from the government. I do not pretend in every instance, to scan the motives of that great and good man; but I believe that he was influenced, generally, by a maxim common to persons of great observation and experience, which is, that if things are not entirely right, the remedy is better left to time than attempted by violent changes. The occasion called upon him to say something; and a compliment to Mr. Adams's administration, which referred, in fact, only to the measures taken in relation to foreign nations, could not be considered as an encomium on federal measures generally, the greater part of which had taken their rise in his own time. This took place, also, in the early part of Mr. Adams's administration, and before the occurrence of many of those acts which occasioned the change that ensued. These additional acts, however, I will acknowledge, were not very necessary to determine the people to have their

government administered on new principles. It was sufficient that the name of Gen. Washington, under cover of which the monarchist Hamilton, and his co-adjutors, had made such bold advances in their schemes of strong government, was withdrawn, and that the people were no longer restrained from a free examination of the public measures, and of the maxims of government which they disclosed. Mr. Adams soon felt the effect of this circumstance, but had not prudence enough to adjust his conduct to the means he possessed of supporting it. He attempted to silence the voice of opposition by a haughty severity. He denounced (I am sorry to remember it) the republicans of the country, as a faction that must be crumbled to dust and ashes; and enraged on the other hand, at the insolent control attempted by Hamilton, Pickering, and the rest, to be exercised over him in the management of foreign affairs, he revolted at all kind of restraint, and dealt his thunderbolts indifferently at friends and foes.— But Mr. Adams, although he ends as he began, an honest man, and a good patriot, had got (no matter how) a good deal bewildered, and neither remembered himself nor the temper of his countrymen, when he undertook to rule the roast in this kingly style. The people saw the struggle between the over confident statesman who desired to govern the country, by his single wisdom, and the officious intriguers who wanted to govern him. They undertook, themselves, to settle the difference, and they no sooner put their hand to the work than Mr. Adams, and his refractory counsellors, were equally relieved from the cares of the nation, and the whole party precipitated into political destruction. Let us pause now for a moment, fellow citizens, to consider the nature and circumstances of this revolution, as it may seem, but, in fact, of this first fair and definite expression of the sentiments of the American People on the kind of government under which they desired to live. Until the formation of the federal constitution they had scarcely been called upon to reflect upon the subject, more especially as it related to their concerns with foreign powers. There was indeed, perhaps, in every state, but certainly in Maryland, before the revolution, a court party, and a country party. The one was, of course, for strong government, for poll taxes, for stamp taxes, for standing troops, for a benefited clergy, &c. and the other for as little of all these as possible. There was undoubtedly in America, on the one hand a set of slaves and sycophants, clinging to the government, and paying a Spaniel-like obedience to those in power; and on the other, a description of men conscious and jealous of their natural and political rights, and zealous in defending them; but still the influence of the people under colonial government was very limited, and the range of their ideas was of consequence confined to small objects—a genuine love of liberty, however, supplied the place of skill in the science of politics; they felt the hand of tyranny, they resisted it, & established their freedom. The formation of the state constitutions undoubtedly called for political knowledge, and those constitutions in general shew that such knowledge was not wanting. But they were formed without any considerable discussions amongst the people at large, as to matters either of principle or organization. The men who composed them had obtained a sufficient training in the contests between the court, and country interests just spoken of: They were eminent and public spirited, and the people were patriotic and tractable. The contest concerning the acceptance of the constitution of the United States turned rather upon a single question, whether we should have a general government instead of a mere confederation, than upon any detailed consideration of the method of administering it. It was only on a practical disclosure of the mischievous principles on which that government was liable to be administered, that the people of this country were fairly called upon to exercise their judgments upon the general subject of politics. On this occasion, they learned to reason, in detail, on the tendency of public measures. They had given the federal administration a full trial. They perceived that the theories and forms of the corrupt government of Great Britain, were putting out of sight the purity and simplicity of republican principles. They observed, system after system, raised upon those theories. They saw a train of taxes, loans, and financial mysteries introduced. They found the government engaged in numerous and intricate foreign connec-

tions; and in the officious and unprincipled project of balancing the powers of Europe; they experienced an undue check and too harsh a control upon their sentiments in reference to the French revolution, an interest in favor of which, so long as it was confined to mere opinions and good wishes, was more than excusable in a people who had themselves, and with the assistance of that nation, so recently succeeded in a contest the same in its principle and object with that in which the French were engaged. Above all, they perceived an evident and determined bias in favor of that government, whose injuries were yet too visible to be forgotten, and of whose continued designs upon their independence a succession of the most flagrant and insolent aggressions left them no room to doubt. It was then, fellow citizens that the people undertook to judge for themselves. It was then, that by transferring the trusts of government, from the federalists to the republicans, they declared to the world the principles on which they meant to be governed; and if the public affairs have been administered on those principles, on what pretence can this discarded faction now expect to be reinstated in your confidence, and in their ill-managed power?

(To be continued.)

For the Maryland Republican.

TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND.

No. II.

IN the course of the communications between the two branches of the legislature, which have been remarked on, frequent allusions were made to the manner in which the senate was then constituted. It was urged that the members were elected two and three years past, and that they had a self-created portion of more than one third of the whole original number. To this it might have been sufficient to answer that under the form of government, the senate was chosen for five years, and that the self-created portion of their number was in reality the creation of the constitution, whose mandates the members had not permitted themselves to disobey. These defects, if such they are, may be remedied in the constitutional manner; but the complaint appears to come with a bad grace from the advocates of energetic measures, and the friends of order and good government. In the memorable interval between the years seventeen hundred and ninety-six and eighteen hundred and one, no such complaint was made from that quarter, and the termination of the five years service of their favourite senate came upon them before it was wished for. It was to the substance, then, and not to the manner that the objections of the majority of the house of delegates applied. It was from the political principles of the members, that the defective organization of the Body was to be inferred; and it must be owned that it was a phenomenon in legislation to see the rights and liberties of the people strenuously supported by what had been deemed the most aristocratic part of the government, while they were committed to the guardianship of federalism in the popular branch. If we look back to the state of the government before the revolution, we shall find that the members of the upper house were in reality separated from the immediate influence of the people, being sheltered under the influence of the proprietary and the crown. The undue attention which in the origin of our present government had been paid to riches, and apparent rank, had certainly a tendency to dispose the senate to tread in the steps of the upper house, to which they appeared to succeed. They were fast approaching to that class of "well born" persons which the advocates of mixed government conceive to be so essential to a well governed state, and to the dread which the people entertained of the aristocracy of the members, we are to attribute their general dismissal by the election in 1801. But the present senate is not constituted of persons of that description. They are not separated either from the influence, or the reach and knowledge of the people; nor are they "less competent to understand the general feelings of the community than the majority of the house of delegates, recently chosen;" of many of whom it may be said that the novelty of their occupation has made them mistake their own feel-

ings and sentiments for those of the people. In the arguments which took place on the embargo, and other measures of the General Government, it was frequently remarked that its habitual opposers, although so clamorous in their reprobation had failed to point out the course which ought to have been pursued. No satisfactory answer has been made to this remark, and we may conclude that the leading federalists in the state were disposed to take the same stand with those members of congress who get off on the ground of declining to be the "pioneers of the administration." Yet, the request of those who find fault with any measure, to propose a better, does not appear to be unreasonable; and if they were desirous of convincing you by argument, instead of misleading you by declamation, their reasons would certainly be strengthened by such a communication. Why should they not have addressed you with candor, and disclosed all that they knew? "This was our situation; those were the measures pursued; but these were the measures that ought to have been adopted." On such an appeal to your judgments we should willingly have met them. But it is possible that it would not have aided their cause to have disclosed their own plan of operations. It would not have been discreet to avow that many of them were disposed to justify the attack made on the Chesapeake, the vexations on our trade, and the impressment of our seamen (as being necessary for the safety of the British Government) and to acquiesce in the tribute imposed by the British orders in council; and, finally, to promote an alliance offensive and defensive with England, and a war with France. The object of laws are to command what is right, and to prohibit what is wrong—but a legislator would not fulfil his duty by confining his edicts to the latter part only. If it is allowable to judge of the great events impending over our country by the transactions of private life, we may compare the conduct of the federalists to that of a guide in a strange country, who should caution the traveller against the wrong road without pointing out the right one, or to an experienced seaman, who should alledge that the pilot was running on a rock, and should refuse to direct him in the course by which it might be shunned. Nor are these comparisons unapt to our situation. The conduct of the two great powers of Europe has been such as to render the road to our national honor and safety difficult to be found, and to present rocks on which the commonwealth (which has been likened to a ship) is in danger of foundering. But these cavillers, though unwilling to communicate the whole extent of their knowledge, are disposed to relieve us from similar dangers in future. Though cautious of advising they are willing to direct, by taking the helm themselves. And in this disposition we find one of the most powerful motives to their opposition to republican principles, which must be weakened or destroyed before they can regain their power. Hence it is that the misrepresentations and insidious exertions spoken of by the senate are resorted to, and that many of the federal presses go beyond those of England in justifying the conduct of that country, and vilifying that of their own. And hence it is that the ministerial writers there, recognize their friends in America, and that the minister himself refers to suggestions of persons now in the American Government, (meaning without doubt the American Senate) in justification of the conditions of accommodation contained in that part of Mr. Erskine's instructions which the British Government chooses to disclose. Patriots, of old, sacrificed themselves for their country. Let us not be forced to suspect that some of those who have been "recently chosen," would sacrifice their country for themselves. SIDNEY.

CHURCH BILL!

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Office of the Maryland Republican,

A complete and correct copy of the CHURCH BILL, reported by the Federal majority of the House of Delegates at the November session, 1808,—accompanied with the Bill to alter such parts of the declaration of Rights and form of government, as prevent persons conscientiously scrupulous, from serving as jurors, which Bill the federal majority refused to act on.