

Annual
Misc

Florida's. It proposed to set apart for the benefit of the new States
"twelve and a half per cent out of the aggregate proceeds, before any
"division took place among the States generally." The new and old States,
were then to receive their proportions of the residue, and to "apply the
"amount received, either to the purposes of education, or the coloni-
"zation of free people of color, or for internal improvements, or for debts,
"which may have been contracted by the States for internal improve-
"ments."

The Bill proposed to distribute among the States, for
State purposes, a fund which had been surrendered to the general
government for national purposes; and, to distribute it in a different
proportion, for the separate use of the States, from that in which it
was intended to be used for the common benefit of the Union. -
It proposed to appropriate the public lands, purchased from France
and Spain, to the construction of State rail roads and Canals, and
to the support of State schools: to which objects, the revenue expended,
in that purchase could, not have been applied. It will hardly
be contended, that the General Government has power over these
subjects; or that Congress has the authority to place the public
money under the control of the State Legislatures, to be expended,
in the exercise of powers reserved to the States. -

This Bill which was in violation of the Constitution of the
United States, and of the compact between the General Government and the
States, was perhaps as free from objections as any other that could be proposed
for a similar object. The principle of distributing the revenue of the
United States in the manner proposed, can never be established,
without disturbing the Constitutional relations between the general
government and the States, and finally destroying the limits,
which were intended to separate their functions and powers.
Congress and the State Legislatures, are now responsible to their
respective constituents; and thus will always be some check upon
their extravagance, while they know, that each must provide the
means of paying its own debts, and expences. But if the general
government be made the collector of what the States are to expend,
every restraint will be removed, and Congress under the influence
of State claims, and State creditors, will become the humble
instruments for laying new taxes and heavier imposts, not to pay the
debts, and to provide for the common defence of the United States,
but to redeem stocks, issued for the use of internal improvement
companies, and which would increase in amount, in proportion
to the facility of their redemption.