

their public and private virtues, their patriotism, and natural and acquired abilities, they will studiously avoid the introducing any one into their body (whether whig or tory) who will tend in any degree to lessen their importance; which we sincerely wish always to see supported and maintained with respect, honour, and dignity. We also see no just ground for your honours to fear, that, at the next choice of senators, the electors will appoint any suspicious characters to a seat in the senate. This house are not under the least alarm for themselves, nor apprehensive that their feelings (as irritable with just cause as those of the senate) would be wounded, by an indiscriminate association with tories. It is not probable, that any of the nonjurors will ever be elected to this body; and if, in some very few instances, it should happen, we disclaim any fear from their abilities or address.

The senate further contend, "that our circumstances render the adoption of the measure peculiarly improper and impolitic, at this time." These circumstances are, "the late treaty of peace is not fully executed by the British government; the western posts are not given up; and there are many subjects of discussion between the two countries; vessels of war upon the Lakes are put in commission by the officers of the king of Great-Britain, and the province of Canada is strengthened by a considerable military force; the public acts of the British government breathe rather an *hostile* than a *friendly* disposition towards this country; and the British nation bear with impatient chagrin their loss of America, and have not relinquished their intention of doing us mischief." In addition to these very alarming facts, it is suggested, "that a war has already commenced, or will soon break out, in Europe." And from the whole a conclusion is drawn, "that no *wise* or *honest* politician would wish our safety, in the smallest degree, dependent on the nonjurors." All these circumstances combined, at first view, in horrid phalanx, may, without reflection, have weight with, and terrify weak minds, and influence them to decide, that this is an improper and impolitic time to allow the nonjurors to vote at elections.

The true mode to determine what regard is justly due to these circumstances, is, to examine each by itself, and then put them all in the scale and weigh them together. This we shall do, (not for the information of your honours, with whom we cannot conceive they could have any influence) but for the benefit of our constituents. The admission or the refusal of nonjurors to vote at our elections, in our humble opinion, will have no influence with the British government to execute the treaty, and to deliver up or retain the western posts. We also conceive, that the vessels of war on the Lakes (if any) will not derive much assistance from the nonjurors.

The few of our people who left us during the late war, have long since had reason to repent their joining the British; and the nonjurors will not leave their connexions and property, and engage in the knight-errant scheme of enlisting under the British standard against their country, relatives and friends, and their passage to the Lakes and Canada, may be attended with some difficulty and hazard. The hostile intention of the British government, and their chagrin at the loss of America, we readily believe, and that they will do us mischief when in their power, we will not question; but involved as they are in a debt, the interest of which a very popular minister cannot discover means to pay, we had little reason to be alarmed on that head; and if the British nation should be so weak as to revive the war, the same cogent motives that influenced the nations of Europe to unite in favour of our independence, will still operate to induce them to give us every assistance in their power; and we think the nonjurors will rather add to, than diminish our strength, if we will admit them to the rights of freemen.

As your honours stated the reasons which influenced your conduct, without any expectation that they would have any weight with us, you cannot be offended with our assuring you, that your opinion was well founded; and we are inclined to believe, that your reasons were calculated rather to alarm the pride and passions of our constituents, than convince their judgment. We so far presume to differ from the senate, as to think that no wise politician can seriously believe, that the state would be in any the least possible danger from admitting the nonjurors to the right of suffrage.

We cannot see the pernicious effects you discover from the adoption of the measure, which you are pleased to consider as extraordinary and unexpected, and a display of liberality and ill-judged tenderness; but, as it is rejected by your honours, you will undoubtedly receive the thanks of the public, for rescuing it from the danger our temerity would have plunged it into unless prevented by your foresight and steady perseverance. If we have erred in judgment, we must submit to the censure of our constituents, and can only console ourselves with the reflection, that our intentions were humane, and, as we thought, politic and wise.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

Mr. Hardcastle, from the house of delegates, delivers to the president the following message:

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, JANUARY 21, 1785.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOURS,

WE have agreed to adjourn till 5 o'clock this evening, for the purpose of sealing the laws, therefore hope your honours will make the necessary preparation for putting an end to the session.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

The senate adjourns till 6 o'clock.

P O S T M E R I D I E M.

The senate met.

The bill, entitled, An act to impose duties on certain enumerated articles imported into and exported out of this state, and on all other goods, wares, and merchandise, imported into this state, with the following messages, was sent to the house of delegates by William Perry, Esq;