

The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error; I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

UNITED STATES, 17th September, 1796.

G. WASHINGTON.

The clerk of the house of delegates delivers to the clerk of the senate the following resolutions:

BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND.

RESOLVED unanimously, That the president of the United States merits the everlasting gratitude of the people; that his profound wisdom in council, and eminent exertions in the field, aided by the virtue and valour of his fellow-citizens, triumphed over British invasion, and led his country through an arduous war to victory and to happiness; establishing its independence by a revolution unfulfilled with a crime, and distinguished for moderation, virtue and humanity. That his wise and steady administration of the general government, promptness in suppressing domestic insurrection, firmness in defeating improper exertions of foreign influence, and perseverance in the system of neutrality, have continued to us those advantages which result from a stable and free government, and have crowned us with the blessings of peace, liberty and prosperity, whilst Europe and the Indies have been convulsed with the horrors of a dreadful and desolating war.

RESOLVED unanimously, That his late paternal address, the result of much reflection and experience, is eminently calculated by its counsels to secure the continuance of the independence, peace, happiness and prosperity of our country, if steadily pursued by his successors, and firmly adhered to by the people; wisely founding the principles of our political conduct on the immovable basis of morality and justice, aided by the influence of religion, learning and virtue in private life.

RESOLVED unanimously, That to perpetuate this valuable present in the most striking view to posterity, it be printed and published with the laws of this session, as an evidence of our approbation of its political axioms, and a small testimony of the affection we bear to the precepts of him, to whom, under Divine Providence, we are principally indebted for our greatest political blessings.

RESOLVED unanimously, That it is the earnest prayer of the legislature of Maryland, that the president, in his contemplated retirement, may find all the blessings of domestic happiness, and live to experience the salutary principles of his administration, operating through his successors to increase the independence, prosperity and welfare of the American people.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

Which were read the first and second time by especial order and assented to, and sent to the house of delegates by the clerk.

The senate adjourns until to-morrow morning 10 o'clock.

W E D N E S D A Y, December 14, 1796.

THE senate met. Present the same members as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read.

The bill, entitled, An act to authorise and empower the president and directors of the Patowmack company to contract the breadth of the locks at the Great Falls of Patowmack, was sent to the house of delegates by the clerk.

The clerk of the house of delegates delivers to the clerk of the senate a bill, entitled, An act for recognizing the coin of the United States, and the value of foreign coins, as established by the acts of the congress of the United States, thus endorsed; "By the house of delegates, December 1, 1796:

Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

"By