own permanent interests as to sacrifice them, together with the good of the country, to whim or corruption.

Their election by the President is another important security. Suppose the Governor shall wish to render the Council his puppets. The President will not feel an interest in gratifying his improper views. It is, however, said that his information will be derived from the governor. But the fact is, he will receive it in part from the governor, and in part from others; and he will be sagacious enough to judge, not from a part, but from the whole that reaches him.

A valuable effect will flow from composing the council of the inhabitants of the country; its members will thereby be initiated in the theory of our government and laws, and this knowledge will hereafter qualify them for higher political trusts; they will acquire much political knowledge; they will return home, and their conversation with their friends will naturally turn on political topics, and on the laws they have passed; thus will a spirit of enquiry and of political discussion spring up in the country. When this effect shall be produced, it will be time, and only then, to give them a government as liberal and free as that contemplated by the amendment.

Mr. MACON *(Speaker)* observed that he coincided in opinion with the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Varnum,) whose object would, he thought, be better tried by a motion to strike out the section. This motion would bring the principle before the House.—If the section should be stricken out, the bill would be recommitted for new modification to a select committee. Mr. Macon accordingly moved to strike out the 4th section.

This motion having been stated from the chair;

Mr. MACON again rose. I will endeavor, said he, to compress my ideas on this point in a few words. My first objection to the principle contained in the section is, that it establishes a species of government unknown to the laws of the United States. We have three descriptions of government: that of the union, that of the states, and territorial governments. I believe the territorial government, as established by the ordinance of the old Congress, the best adapted to the circumstances of the people of Louisiana; and that it may be so modified as best to promote their convenience. The people residing in the Mississippi territory, are now under this kind of government. Is it not likely that the people of Louisiana, will expect the same form of government and laws with their neighbours, and is it not desirable for the general peace and happiness, that there should be a correspondence between them? If they are as ignorant as some gentlemen represent them (and of this I know nothing) will they not expect the same grade of government with the inhabitants of the Mississippi territory, with whom they will have a constant intercourse. Although they lived previously under the Spanish government, and although their numbers did not entitle them, when formed into a territory, to the second grade of government, no inconvenience resulted. It is said in reply to this observation that a large number of inhabitants of that territory were Americans. It is true that many of them were native Americans, but some also were Spanish.

The simple question is what kind of government is most fitted to this people. It is extremely difficult to legislate for a people with whose habits and customs we are unacquainted. I, for one, declare myself unacquainted with them; nor would I in fixing the government unless for the safety of the union, do an act capable of disgusting the people for whom it is adopted. It will be a wise policy to avoid whatever is calculated to disgust them—My opinion is that they will be better satisfied with an old established form of government, than with a new one. Why? Because they have seen it established in the adjacent territory of Mississippi, and know the manner in which it operates. If there are bad men in Louisiana, will any thing be more easy than to disgust the people against the general government by shewing that they have given one kind of government to the people of the Mississippi territory, and a different kind to them? In my mind, it is sound policy to give them no cause of complaint. We ought to shew them that we consider them one people.

I will not pretend to say that the people of Louisiana are prepared for a state government, which differs most materially from a territorial government. The best way to prepare them for such a government, is to take the system already known to our laws—one grade or the other of the territorial government. For myself I would prefer the adoption of the second grade; but I would prefer the first to any new system. For these reasons I hope the section will be struck out, and the bill be referred to a select committee.

Mr. G. W. Cambell said he would submit a few reasons in favor of the motion to strike out the section. As the hour was late he would endeavour to compress his observations in as narrow a compass as possible. The principal question is whether we shall give the inhabitants of Louisiana the right of self government, or even the hope that they will hereafter enjoy the benefits of self government and of those rights which there is no doubt but that they conceive themselves entitled to under the treaty with France. In examining this question, it may be proper to take a brief notice of the section proposed to be stricken out, and the degree of liberty it is calculated to give the inhabitants of Louisiana. On examining the section, it will appear that it really establishes a complete despotism; that it does not evince a single trait of liberty; that it does not confer one single right to which they are entitled under the treaty; that it does not extend to them the benefits of the federal constitution, or declare when, hereafter, they shall receive them. I believe it will, on investigation, be found difficult to separate liberty from the right of self government; and hence arises the question, now to be decided, whether we shall countenance the principle of governing by despotic systems of government, or support the principle that they are entitled to be governed by laws made by themselves, and to expect that they shall, in due time, receive all the benefits of citizens of the United States under the constitution.

By the section all legislative power is vested in a governor and thirteen councellors appointed by the president—The people have no share in their choice—The members of the council are only to aid the governor; they have no right to make laws themselves; the words of the section are: "the governor, by and with advice and consent of the said legislative council, or of a majority of them, shall have power to alter, modify, or repeal the laws which may be in force at the commencement of this act."—That is the governor makes the laws by and with the advice of the council. They are not to deliberate on what shall be law; but he, like some ancient potentates, is to suggest to them what, in his opinion, is proper to be law. This is the proper construction of this section, or I do not understand it. "*He is to make, &c.*"—They are not to make the laws, and submit them to him for his approbation. He makes them, and asks his creatures whether they will agree or not agree to them. I hope we are not prepared to establish such a system as this.

If then the proposed system be despotic, it is proper, in the next place, to enquire why it is erected over the people of Louisiana? Is their condition such as not to qualify them for the enjoyment of any of the blessings of liberty? Are they blind to the difference between liberty and slavery? Are they insensible to the difference of laws made by themselves, and of laws made by others? We have no evidence that this is the case. If we retrace the progress of liberty among other nations, I would ask gentlemen where they find reason for the opinion that the people of Louisiana are unfitted for the enjoyment of its blessings? They will find that it has, in many cases, arisen among people far less enlightened. I trust, therefore, we shall not determine that because the people of that country have not investigated the full value of a free government, they are not qualified to enjoy any freedom. I ask gentlemen, when they talk of the abuse of the elective franchise, to point out a solitary instance where the people have abused the rights they acquired under it?—They will find it hard to point out one. Whereas I ask them for a single instance, in the annals of mankind, where despotism has not been abused. This they will find it equally difficult to adduce. One principle cannot be denied. When power is vested in the people, they exercise it for their own benefit, and to the best of their skill. They have no object in abusing it; for they are sure to be the first victims of its improper exercise. I ask them where is the danger of placing in the hands of the people the right of choosing those who are to regulate their own internal concerns? Surely when gentlemen depicted the great danger of this investiture of power, they did not consider that the very act before us subjects all laws to the control of Congress, and that in all cases where in Congress shall negative them they will have no validity. Where then is the danger? Will it be injurious to the United States that the legislature of the territory, chosen by the people, should make laws for their own accommodation, without prejudice to the union? It cannot. I feel surprised when gentlemen say, we ought to be cautious in giving power, lest it should be used in opposition to the interests of the union. How can this be when this government has the appointment of all the officers, and particularly the governor and judges; and when to the legislature is only confided the management of internal concerns? When they have no authority to form connections with foreign powers, or to form any coalition with their neighbours in opposition to the measures of the general government. If the people are already hostile to the United States, it is evident that it is not the severity of despotism that will make them friendly. I ask how we are to account for this change. Not long since this people were congratulated on their releasement from a despotic government, and were invited into the arms of a government ready to extend to them all the blessings of self-government. Now we are about to damp all their hopes, and to send forth a few creatures to lash them with despotism, to make all their laws. We go further. We do not even hold forth the idea that at a future day they shall make their own laws.—Our language is, if notwithstanding the despotism we extend over you, like good subjects, you patiently bear your chains, we may withdraw them, and let you govern yourselves. If this is not the amount of the language of gentlemen, I do not comprehend it.

It is stated by a gentleman from Massachusetts, that it is difficult to form a government for such a people; and that it is necessary previously to consider the habits and manners of the people to be governed. I am sorry, at this enlightened day of the world, to hear arguments in favor of despotism, so often used before. How does a despot govern his subjects? He tells them, and makes them believe, that they are ignorant and unqualified to govern themselves; considering their ignorance, he tells them he does them a favor by governing them, and they have nothing to do but to obey. This is the doctrine on which monarchy and despotism rise;—as it prevails, despotism prevails, and in proportion as it is destroyed, the principle of liberty prevails. Let us not say, the people are too ignorant to govern themselves. No. Give them an opportunity, & they will acquire knowledge, at least sufficient to make a proper choice of those best qualified to superintend their public concerns. This will act as a stimulus to those who expect to be chosen, to make themselves qualified. But I never knew before this day, that for a people to be fit for the enjoyment of liberty, they must, for a certain time, be under the scourge of despotism.

The same gentleman enquires, in case the elective franchise shall be extended, what hold we shall have on the people of Louisiana? This enquiry is readily answered: we shall have power to reject all laws they may make—and a governor appointed by us, will have the nomination of all military and civil officers, who administer the government. If this is not a hold and check upon them I know not what is. While examining this point, it may not be improper to enquire, what is the best may of making these people most attached to the United States; and whether that end will be answered best by denying them all liberty, and by making a radical difference between their government and that of territories similarly situated with themselves. Let me for once observe, that it is the true policy of this government to conciliate the people to us, to our manners and laws, to shew them, that considering them as a part of the union, they have a right to expect the enjoyment of privileges unknown to them before, instead of disappointing their hopes, and compelling them to serve a long quarantine before they are admitted to a participation of those rights which we ourselves possess.

It has been intimated that these people are unfit to govern themselves, but I am acquainted with no information that warrants this inference. I believe that information of a different nature derived from other gentlemen, is more to be relied on, because those who give it are better informed. As to their interests I cannot conceive what can have rendered them so different from those of the people of the Mississippi territory; they were once the same people and under the same government, and they could not have then become unfit for self government. The best information assures us that a considerable proportion of the population is composed of American citizens, amounting perhaps to one-fourth or one fifth of the whole. There are also many British subjects, not so ignorant as to be entirely insensible to the benefits of a free government.

Is there too any thing in the Spanish government whose effects are so degrading as to disqualify a man from enjoying freedom? If this were the case it would have been an argument against accepting the country at all.—Have we not, however, understood that this great measure has been effected with a double view of accommodating the United States and benefitting the people of Louisiana, by extending to them the advantages of a free government? Shall we consider ourselves at liberty to barter them, to view them as cattle, and govern them as such? I hope not. Let us look at the treaty and attend to its language. It says

"The inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated in the union of the United States, and admitted, as soon as possible, according to the principles of the federal constitution, to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages & immunities of citizens of the United States; and in the mean time they shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and the religion which they profess."

By the very act before us a number of the laws of the United States are extended to them; by this the principle is admitted that the rights, advantages, and immunities can, according to the constitution, be extended to them; if they can be so extended, it becomes a question of policy altogether, how far they shall be extended. Is it then politic or not at this time to extend the privileges they are entitled to as a territory of the United States? One idea relied on by gentlemen is worthy of notice—it takes for granted that the people do not wish for a free government. I ask gentlemen if they are really serious in this remark? If they are, the argument will be conclusive in giving them, if they choose it, an absolute despotism. If we knew it were the desire of the people to have a king, whatever might be our opinions of the benefits of liberty, it would be our duty to give them one. Gentleman cannot think so, nor would they suffer the United States to degrade their character by such an act. I conceive the United States bound to give them a republican form of government, and to consider therefore not what they may desire, but what will best suit their ultimate interest, while it promotes the benefit of America at large. One gentleman observes, that we ought to regard the people of Louisiana as totally distinct from, and as not possessed of any similar habits with ourselves. I trust however, we shall consider them as a part of the human species—I believe the gentleman will find the human character the same in different parts of the globe; if this principle had been pursued, liberty had never flourished; if the people had never enjoyed liberty till they were ripe for it, how many ages of darkness would have passed away;—but the fact is the people suffer oppression to an astonishing degree—despotism grinds them down till human nature can endure no more, and then they break their chains in a revolt. I therefore can see no force in the argument of waiting till they are ripe for liberty. How ripe? If they have never tasted its benefits how can they know them. I trust, therefore, we shall extend to them the same rights as are enjoyed by the other territories. I will close what I have to say on this subject with a few additional remarks. Much has been said of the interests of the people to prove them incapable of exercising the elective franchise. I will only observe in addition to what I have already stated, that I believe that principle was the first made use of among nations. We find it among savage nations, and we find all nations even in the darkest periods exercising it, until deprived of their liberties by one or a few designing and ambitious characters. Should the committee agree to strike out this section, it is my wish to propose an amendment similar in substance to the provisions established in the Mississippi territory, I will not take up the time of the committee with reading the rough draft which I have drawn to this effect, but barely state that my object is to empower the Governor and judges to execute the government until they shall divide the territory, & until the people choose their own legislature. I trust, therefore, the committee will agree to strike out the section, and that it shall not hereafter be said, that we met to make laws for a people, whom we have called our friends and brothers, different from the laws which we have made for ourselves.

The committee then rose—Ayes 59—And leave was given them by the House to sit again.

[*To be continued.*]

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April 21—

WASHINGTON CITY.

MONDAY, APRIL 30, 1804.

It is with much pleasure we extract the following article from the Washington Federalist. The facts of the writer are correct, and the inferences generally sound.

We have frequently noticed the progress of improvement in the inland navigation of the river Potomac, and its tributary streams: and believing that no enterprize has been attempted by a private company, in this new world, of so much public utility, we shall continue to lay before our readers, such material information respecting it, as it may be in our power to obtain from sources, entirely correct.

It is generally known, that this great work was begun under the auspices of Gen. Washington a few years after the revolutionary war: about five hundred thousand dollars have been expended in its prosecution; several years must yet elapse, before the whole of the object in the contemplation of the company, can be completely effected. Enough, however, has been accomplished, to afford such facility to the back inhabitants, that part of the country, so remote from any sea port by land conveyance, as to prohibit the raising of any thing for sale, except cattle, have become, and are daily becoming the best grain settlements in the Atlantic states. Merchant mills are erecting in the Allegany mountains, and farmers 200 miles from a sea port, get their flour transported, to the seat of government of the United States, at an expense less than is paid for fifty miles land carriage.

The main branch of the river, which extends from tide water, to the foot of the Allegany mountains, is now navigable to the mouth of George's creek, about 220 miles by water from the city of Washington, and twenty some odd miles above the town of Cumberland: there remains however, some trifling obstructions in this branch, which impede the navigation in the dry seasons of the year; but it is questionable whether this inconvenience does not result more from the bad construction of the boats employed in the navigation, than any defect in the work on the river. These boats carry 120 bbls of flour, and draw from 22 inches to two feet water. If they draw but 12 or 14 inches, they would meet with no difficulties for ten months in the year, and experiments are making, the success of which is said to be certain, to reduce them to the proper draft of water.

In this year there has been no interruption in the navigation from the want of water, or too great draft of the boats: large quantities of flour, timber and other articles have descended the river; and the prospects are such as to leave no doubt, that every thing in the upper country prepared or preparing for water transportation, will readily find its way to market, in the present season. One gentleman, a rich enterprising farmer in Frederick county Maryland, residing some miles higher up the river Monocacy than Fredericktown, has already sent his boat five times to this market, since the breaking up of the fresh, and has delivered upwards of 500 bbls of flour.

There are several streams that discharge themselves into the main branch of the river, some of which are scarcely less important than the main branch itself. The most considerable of these are the Shenandoah, the South Branch, the Monocacy, and the Conococheague. The South branch is now navigable 50 or 60 miles, the Monocacy, about half that distance and into the heart of Frederick county, the largest richest, and most productive county in Maryland—the other two branches are not in a state of so much improvement, but the whole energies of the company are now directed to an operation on the Shenandoah, which will cost 40 or 50,000 dollars, and which when finished, will add to our present inland navigation, little short of 200 miles, and into the finest country of the United States.

From these data, the public will draw its own conclusions. Every intelligent reader will perceive in this great effort of a private company, consequences above the reach of ordinary minds, not to a large portion of the people of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania only, who are more immediately to enjoy the benefits of this navigation; but to the best interests of the whole people of the United States in the duration of their union. Between the heretofore navigable eastern and western waters, there is a country of immense extent, the greater part of which is without inhabitants,