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MESSAGE.

From the President of the United States, communicating a report of the surveyor of the public buildings, at the city of Washington, on the subject of the said buildings, and the application of the monies appropriated for them.

6th December, 1804.—Ordered to lie on the table.

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To the Senate, and House of Representatives of the United States.

I communicate for the information of congress, a report of the surveyor of the public buildings at Washington, on the subject of those buildings, and the application of the monies appropriated for them.

TH: JEFFERSON.

Dec. 6th, 1804.

Accompanying a message from the president of the United States, received 6th December, 1804.

To the President of the United States.

SIR,

In reporting to you on the manner, in which the work on the public buildings of the United States has been conducted, during the year 1804, I cannot avoid expressing my regret, that a sensible portion of the appropriation by congress has necessarily been expended in pulling down, or repairing what was done insufficiently, previously to the year 1803.

The application of the public money, to the separate objects of the president's house, and the capitol, including the alteration, removal, re erection or repair of the works, will be separately stated in the accounts of the superintendant of the city, to be rendered to the treasury. But as these accounts will not be closed, until the first of January 1805, he has furnished me with the following statement, up to the present day, of payments in the present year, out of the appropriation of 1804, and a balance of the appropriation of 1803, not expended in that year, viz.

CAPITOL.	
Including all alterations, additions and repairs, in the north wing, except fitting up representatives' chamber,	44,548 20
For fitting up representatives' chamber,	689 28
PRESIDENT'S HOUSE,,	11,928 29
Payments on account for sundry materials, an account of the particular application whereof, has not been rendered,	500
Dollars	57, 665 72

PRESIDENT'S HOUSE.

It is well known that the President's house was inhabited before it was finished; and that it still remains in a state so far from completion, as to want many of those accommodations, which are thought indispensible in the dwelling of a private citizen. Of all the inconveniencies attending the house, the greatest was the leakiness of the roof, which had indeed never been tight. The rain water which entered the building in every part, had injured the furniture exceedingly, and ruined many of the ceilings. This important defect arose from two principal causes: the very injudicious manner in which the gutters and the troughs conveying the water to the cistern were constructed; and the badness of the slating.

The gutters are of lead. The sheets were soldered together: the fall or current of the gutters was much too small: the openings in the roof through which the water passed into the troughs, were so contracted, as to be incapable of discharging the water of a moderate rain, consequently it overflowed, and found its way into the building: the troughs were of boards lined with lead, soldered at the joints, and laid with very little current, and all the lead was of bad quality and badly cast. All and each of the causes occasioned leakage in the gutters and troughs. It requires very little theory or experience, to know that, wherever solder is used in leaden gutters, leakage is inevitable. In water cisterns and pipes, solder is necessary, and the joints made with it are found and permanent, the temperature of the water they contain not being subject to great variation. But in gutters and flats, alternately exposed to the scorching sun, and to severe frost, the use of solder is every where inadmissible, but peculiarly so in our climate. It is besides very expensive, and in no well constructed building, it is necessary. In the President's house five feet of additional current was easily procured, and by that means the new gutters were laid without solder, and with proper grovings and drips.

The first part of the season was so uncommonly wet, that no very early measures could be taken, to make a thorough repair of the roof.—The attempts at temporary repair, made with a view to save the furniture and ceilings of the house, did not succeed, and tended only to prove the absolute necessity of a complete alteration of the whole system of guttering, and of providing new lead for the whole building. Such a general repair is always troublesome and difficult, and was much more expensive than it would have been to have executed the work right at first. It is now finished, and the roof is free from leaks. It will, I have no doubt, remain so.

The second cause of leakage was the slating. The quality of the slates was bad: but their size, especially towards the ridge, was more injurious than their bad quality. The upper courses, for a considerable distance down the roof, did not shew more than from two to two and an half inches in width; and a large majority of these slates, were only from one and an half to three inches in breadth. Slated roofs are always difficult to repair; but such a roof could not be repaired at all: and there were also other reasons, which rendered it necessary, at all events, to remove so heavy a covering as slate.

I am uninformed why the particular mode of construction, which renders this roof so heavy and so high, was adopted. If strength was proposed, capable of bearing a covering of slate laid in mortar, it has not been attained, for the framing has every where given way, and at the eastern end of the house, where there are no internal walls, it has failed so much, as to force out both the front and the back walls very considerably. It appeared therefore necessary, in the first place, to secure the timbers, as well as the walls, by strong ties of iron; which being fixed, both are now perfectly safe— In the next place, it became highly proper to take off the load of slate and mortar, even had they not leaked; for they seemed to be the principal cause of the failure of the framing. In the covering which was to supply the place of the slate, lightness was the principal requisite; but safety from fire, and economy, were also necessary considerations.—— Shingles and tiles were therefore out of the question, as well as lead; and the choice was confined to copper, tin, and painted sheet iron. Of these, sheet iron was by far the cheapest, and with a little attention to its painting, quite as permanent, as the two former. 100 feet superficial of slating in mortar, weighs about 15 cwt.—of sheet iron, exactly 147lb. So that the building—the roof containing 12,600 superficial feet—could be relieved of a weight of about 82 tons. These reasons induced the adoption of a sheet iron roof, which has accordingly been put on.

The repair, or rather the total renewal of the roof of the president's house, forms the principal part of the expence of this building for the season. It has however been further requisite, to make a new drain from the house, of such dimensions and construction, as to prevent it from being filled up as before, and the building from being flooded from the circumjacent grounds. The cost of this improvement, and the finishing of one of the chamber apartments in the second story, bears a small proportion to the former sum.

2. THE CAPITOL.

In my former reports to you, I stated the propriety of reconsidering the plan of the south wing of the capitol; and on the reasons given in that report, and in a letter to the chairman of the committee of the house of representatives, appointed to enquire into the subject, the plan which has been the ground work of all that has been done during the season was approved and adopted.

By the arrangements of this new design, the house of representatives will sit on the principal story of the building, the whole of the ground story being appropriated to the offices of the house: a situation the most contiguous which could be obtained, and far preferable, for offices, to the north wing or the attic story.

Various causes have conspired to prevent our carrying up, this season, as large a mass of building as was expected. The first and principal of these have been, the time, labour, and expense of pulling down to the very foundation, all that had been formerly erected. Bad as the workmanship appeared before the walls were taken down, the measure of removing them entirely was still more justified, by the state in which they were found to be on their demolition. Even the materials, with the exception of the bricks, were not of any important value to the new work. The stone was fit only to be used as common rubble, and most of the timber was in a state of decay, from the exclusion of air.

Another cause of delay in preparation, and an important one, was the late period at which the appropriation was made. The extreme wetness of the beginning of the season, and the floods which filled up some of the quarries, and retarded the working of others, afterwards operated much against the progress of the building, and threw great difficulties in our way. After the work had begun, we were again interrupted by the sickness which prevailed, and which at one time, threatened, by depriving us of many of our best workmen, to put a stop to the work.

Under all these inconveniences, and others arising from the nature of the building itself, the work has been carried on. The best mode of proceeding would undoubtedly have been, to have carried up the interior with the exterior walls. But the former building stood within the area of the wing. Had the external walls been suffered to remain on the level at which the work was closed at the end of the year 1803, till the inner building could be removed, and the internal wall carried up, little progress could have been made in the former, during the present season, and the stone-cutters would have been idle. It was therefore thought best, to carry up all the external walls by themselves, thereby forwarding the more slow progress of the ornamental work in free-stone, and to construct them in such a manner, as to prepare for good bond with the interior work, and for the support of the vaults the pressure of which they will be required to resist. Thus has the work been raised to the level of the selles of the attic windows externally, and by far the most tedious and expensive part of the work in free stone has been completed, excepting the cornice, and the capitals of the pilasters. Of the cornice a large portion is also wrought, and of the 30 capitals 16 are finished.

Of the interior parts of the building, all the foundations are laid, and brought up to the floor of the cellar story on the north side, and although they do not appear to view, the work done in them is very considerable. The whole south half of the cellar story is vaulted, and ready to receive the walls of the basement or office story.

Preparations to a very great extent have already been made in order to proceed vigorously with the building, as soon as the will of the national legislature shall be known to that effect, and the season will permit. All the free stone for the external walls, entablature, and ballustrade is provided, and the greater part of it on the spot. For the internal colonnade, all the stone is ordered, most of it is quarried, and much of it is already brought to the building. Early in the season the public quarry on the island in Acquia creek was opened, and much useful stone quarried; and it would have been much to the advantage of the public, had the extent of the appropriation permitted us to have prosecuted this work. But it was found, that to clear out the rubbish of former workings, and to provide for the conveyance of the stone to the water side, although ultimately a measure of economy, would have made too large a deduction from the funds required to carry on the building itself, and contracts for stone with individuals were therefore preferred.

In the arrangements for erecting so large an edifice as the south wing of the capitol, and for pulling down or repairing extensive works of former construction, it was not easy, perhaps it was impossible, so to proportion all the various contracts and engagements for labor and materials to the funds appropriated to their ultimate liquidation, as to keep within their limits, and at the same time to make exertions equal to the public expectation arising out of their extent.

In the present instance, the contracts which are made, and which are in the progress of their completion, will exceed in amount, what remains of the appropriation of last year. I must however at the same time observe, that the stock of materials wrought and now ought, which are now actually at the building, exceeds greatly this deficiency. Should the legislature, on view of the solid, permanent and incombustible manner in which the work has been executed, and on consideration of the evidences of fidelity to their duty, which those engaged in the labour of the work have every where exhibited, think proper to proceed with the completion of the building, of their house, it would very much contribute to the early occupation by the House of Representatives, if an appropriation exceeding 50,000 dollars were made for the next season. Such an appropriation, while it would give larger limits to the exertions which might be made, would by no means disturb that system of economy which has hitherto been pursued, but would rather conduce to the more advantageous and provident purchase of all our materials. And it is especially to be considered, that too early and extensive provision cannot be made, for those parts of the work, which must necessarily be of wood. The time is now at hand, at which further delay would be injurious and expensive, and should the sum necessary for this provision, added to the arrears which are or will become due, on outstanding contracts, be defrayed out of a future appropriation, of only 50,000 dollars; the progress of the solid parts of the building, will be materially injured, and must to a certain extent be put off to another season beyond the next.

In my letter of the 28th February, 1804, to the chairman of the committee of the House of Representatives, to whom the subject of the public buildings was referred, I presumed, that three annual appropriations of 50,000 dollars each, would be sufficient to finish the south wing of the Capitol. This estimate was given under statement of the extreme difficulty of estimating a work of this kind. One of the appropriations of 50,000 dollars has been granted, but from the detail of the statements I herein submit to you, it will appear, that the whole of it could not possibly be made applicable to the actual progress of the work on the Capitol.

Having thus endeavored correctly and minutely to report the progress of the work on the public buildings, during the past season, I now most respectfully submit to you all the views of the past, and for the future, which the facts suggest.

B. HENRY LATROBE,
Surveyor of the public buildings of the U. States, at Washington.

LEGISLATURE OF NEW-HAMPSHIRE.

—

Friday, November 23.

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

His excellency the governor met the two branches of the legislature this day, and delivered the following

SPEECH:

Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the Senate,

Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,

Assembled at this time, to which the legislature was adjourned, agreeably to your request, for the purpose of performing the public duties required by the constitution—while we gratefully acknowledge our obligations to the Supreme Governor of the world, for the exalted privileges with which our country has been favoured—may we unite our efforts, as the representatives of a free people, in devising the best means of promoting the public welfare, and for securing the individual rights and lasting happiness of our fellow citizens.

It seems to be a principle uncontroverted, that none but a virtuous people can long support a free government. How important then it is that the promotion of virtue should be duly regarded in the formation and execution of laws; that encouragement and support should be given to institutions calculated to inform the mind, and instruct in the moral and religious duties.

Since the last session of the legislature, I have received a letter from the Secretary of State, informing, that the amendment, proposed during the last session of Congress, to the constitution of the United States, respecting the manner of voting for President and Vice-President of the United States, has been ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several states. This letter will be laid before you.

I have also received a letter from his excellency the governor of the commonwealth of Massachusetts, inclosing a resolution of their legislature, proposing an amendment of the constitution of the United States, as it respects the apportionment of representatives among the several states, and confining the same to the number of free inhabitants respectively. The letter and resolution will be laid before you. The importance of the proposed amendment, and respect for the doings of a sister state, claim, and will undoubtedly have, your candid and deliberate attention. The constitution of the United States was undoubtedly formed with much deliberation, and ought not to be altered without manifest reasons therefor: yet it was wisely provided, that alterations might be made if found necessary.

Representatives and direct taxes are included in the same article in the constitution, and were to be apportioned among the states on the same principles. That part of the article, which respects direct taxes, appears to be nominal;—while the proportion of representatives from some of the states is greatly increased in consequence of the large number of slaves which they hold; and the importation of slaves, which, it is said, is now publicly allowed by one or more of the states, has a tendency further to increase the inequality of representation.

The several matters unfinished at the last session, or referred to the present, will occupy your attention; and I cannot omit mentioning particularly that which respects a building for the confinement of criminals, as being highly important.

Whatever business you may think proper to lay before me will meet my ready attention. And be assured, gentlemen, that I shall esteem it a pleasure to co-operate with you in measures calculated to promote justice, and advance the general welfare.

JOHN T. GILMAN.

State of New Hampshire, }
November 23, 1804. }

ANSWER OF THE SENATE.

—

May it please your Excellency,

Assembled at this time to perform the duties enjoined upon us by the constitution of this state, and taking into consideration the happy situation of our public affairs, we feel ourselves bound to acknowledge with gratitude the many unmerited favors and exalted privileges, which we, through the blessings of Divine Providence, enjoy, under our present free and enlightened republican governments. Be assured, Sir, our united efforts shall be exerted, in devising the best means to promote the public welfare, to protect and secure the civil and religious rights of our constituents against the arts and intrigues of designing men.

Sensible that virtuous habits are the surest preservatives of a free government, we therefore consider it our duty to encourage and support those institutions, the best calculated to inform and instruct the mind in moral and religious duties. And we regret that institutions established according to the indications of Divine Providence, for the benefit of mankind, should ever be made instrumental in attempts to subvert the only free government now existing; instead of affording encouragement to support it under our present successful experiment; or that any should attempt to weaken the energies of a free people, by declaring that our representative government cannot long exist, by invidious comparisons of it with other systems.

With pleasure and satisfaction we receive your Excellency's communication of the ratification of the Amendment to the federal constitution, in the choice of President and Vice-President of the U. States—hoping thereby to escape those dangers to which we have so recently been exposed.

That part of your Excellency's communication, relative to an amendment of one of the fundamental articles of the constitution of the United States, proposed by the legislature of Massachusetts, will be duly attended to, and the subject receive all that candor and deliberation, which respect for the doings of a sister state, & the more important consideration of preserving the union of the several states, merit. We coincide with your Excellency in the belief that the system of our general government was framed and adopted after much solemn deliberation, and that the provision made for alterations, as time and experience might point out, was wise. But the reasons for a change ought to be clear and strong, lest while endeavoring to avoid some apparent inconvenience, greater unforeseen disadvantages are produced, and by one change after another the constitution be essentially altered, and the harmony of the system destroyed.

From the history of other nations, we have no right to expect a perpetual exemption from wars. Though, under our present happy situation, direct taxation may appear nominal; yet, should we be so unfortunate as to be engaged in war, that would not be the case; for from the probable failure of other resources direct taxation must be resorted to; and should this amendment take place, we should, from the reduction of representation in those states, to which the proposed alteration alludes, throw a