

Gentlemen of the Senate, and

of the House of Representatives,

The Prosperity which our

Country has attained under the operation of the Federal Government, must afford very sincere Satisfaction to all who are interested in its Welfare.

To estimate the advantages of that Constitution, and the Administration of the General Government, it would be necessary only to contrast the Aspect of our Public Affairs, prior to the commencement of the Government, with our present Situation. The Result would manifest the Wisdom of the adopted Regulations, by their beneficial influence on public Credit, Commerce, Agriculture, and the attainment of general Prosperity.

As Experience is the best test of the Utility

of

of political Systems, such Retrospects tend to cherish a
national attachment to the Federal Constitution. The
contemplation also naturally leads us to view with
grateful Affection the Man whose Virtues, Zeal, and
Talents have been conspicuously employed in achieving
our Revolution, and whose Administration since, as
Chief-Magistrate of the United States, conducted with
Wisdom, Firmness, and Patriotism, and uniting
general confidence, has greatly contributed to the Success
of the present System of Federal Government. Under the
impression of these Sentiments, and I trust they are in
unison with those of my Fellow-Citizens at large,
and of their Representatives, his meditated Retirement
from Office excites Sensations of Regret; but his Retire-
ment it is presumed, will be accompanied by the
public

public Sentiment of Gratitude and Approbation, the
best Reward a Patriot-Mind can receive, or a free
and generous People bestow.

It has been signified to me, within the time
prescribed by the Act, intituled, "An act to incorporate a
Bank in the Borough of Wilmington, in this State",
that the President, Directors, and Company of the Bank
of Delaware, have accepted the said recited act of
Incorporation. This Instrument of Acceptation the
Secretary will lay before you, together with authen-
ticated Copies of the Laws passed at the first session
of the fourth Congress of the United States, and also
a volume of the laws of Pennsylvania, transmitted to
me from the Executive Department of that State, for

the

the use of the Legislature.

The State of Virginia has proposed an annual interchange of Laws, comprehending the existing Code. Pennsylvania has furnished to this State those parts of her Laws which have been lately reprinted. However desirable such a mutual Communication might be, the Executive of this State is unable to comply, without legislative Provision: It is therefore respectfully submitted to the Consideration of the General Assembly.

Your knowledge, Gentlemen, of the Interests of the State, and your disposition to adopt every beneficial Regulation to advance them, may, in a great degree, render special Recommendations unnecessary. Yet, one important Subject, the

the Amendment of the System of penal Jurisprudence, requires, from its Magnitude, and the propriety of alteration at this Period of Civilization, that it be earnestly recommended to your Attention. The experience of the State of Pennsylvania, as well as that of other Countries, has demonstrated that Confinement and Labour tend more effectually to deter from the commission of Crimes than sanguinary Inflictions; and of course, answer better one of the great Ends of Public Punishment. The System of Confinement and Labour has many powerful and obvious Considerations to induce its Adoption: It is also more agreeable to the Sentiments of our Fellow-Citizens, and more congenial to the Mild Spirit of our Constitution.

Dover, January 4. 1797. J. W. B. C. D. J. 1797

Message
From the Governor
1797

replied to
Mr. James
Mr. Miller
Mr. Hayes