friendship among states that would otherwise be rivals and enemies, exempts them from the scourge of frequent wars, gives unbounded freedom to their internal trade, and, while it enables them to dispense with that sort of strong government which is scarcely compatible with liberty, it gives them an aggregate strength, which secures them against external attacks. On the other hand, each sepa­rate district, acting by its own legislature, is invested with the entire regulation of its local concerns, which can never be intrusted to others without the certainty of mismanage­ment. No single legislative body, even were its sessions perpetual, could properly conduct the local business of such an empire as that now forming in North America. In our own parliament, it is notorious, that, from the mul­tiplicity of business transacted, the general style of legisla­tion is most slovenly, and bills of all kinds, but especially local bills, are often grossly mismanaged. How great an impediment is it felt to be to the redress of grievances, or the promotion of improvements, in the remote parts of Scotland and Ireland, that witnesses, parties, and agents, must be carried six or seven hundred miles, at a vast ex­pense, and that, when they reach the seat of legislation, every thing must depend on the votes of persons who either understand their business imperfectly or not at all, and who are only prevailed upon, by solicitation, to bestow a slight attention upon it. The division into states supplies the only remedy to this great evil. It encourages local improvements, by uniting those whose situation gives them a community of interest as to certain objects. It lessens corruption in the general government, by subdividing pa­tronage. In times of public phrensy, it multiplies the se­curities against the persecution of individuals, because such persons w ill always find protectors in some one of the state governments. It has indeed one disadvantage ; the state legislatures may become the strongholds of faction, as was exemplified in Massachusetts during the last war. But as the number of states increases, the weight of each in the confederacy, and its power to disturb the union, are diminish­ed. Even out of this danger a security arises against an­other. The existence of the separate state governments forms a strong barrier against despotism, because it creates so many distinct centres of power, from which resistance might be made, if a military tyrant should master the ge­neral government, as Cromwell mastered that of Britain, and Bonaparte that of France. Some inconvenience, no doubt, arises from the unavoidable diversity of laws in such an aggregation of republics ; but the evil is not much felt or complained of practically, and it is the necessary con­comitant of a union producing boundless advantages. An iron despotism may subject all its slaves to the same laws, without regard to the distinctions of climate, character, or situation ; but freemen will not associate voluntarily on such a principle. Liberty consists not in being governed by the laws that are absolutely best, but by those which are deemed best by the people w ho obey them. No w ise and liberal statesman will hold it necessary that the fisher­men of Massachusetts, the husbandmen of Pennsylvania, and the sugar-planters of Louisiana, should live under one perfectly uniform system of jurisprudence. Such a uni­formity could not be enforced without rending asunder the union. And let it be recollected, that the diversity of laws, such as it exists, is much less than it would be if the federal compact were dissolved, and the several states en­tirely independent. In short, if it is possible by any de­vice to reconcile freedom with extensive empire ; to unite all the parts of a vast continent together in the bonds of peace and commercial intercourse ; and yet not to trench materially on the natural rights of each part, or the free use of its natural powers and advantages ; it must be by a federative system similar in its essential characters to that of the United States. The experiment is by far the most interesting that has ever been made in the science of legis­lation; and the steadiness and success with which it has hitherto proceeded opens up the most encouraging pros­pects as to the future destiny of mankind.

The federal government, of which we shall afterwards speak, possesses merely those specific powers which are vested in it by the constitution. Ali other powers and rights remain with the state governments, in which the so­vereignty essentially resides. The territory of each state is not the territory of the Union, but of that particular state. The people and militia are the people and militia of the several states, not of the Union. Lands are held under the laws of the states ; descents, contracts, and all the concerns of private property, the administration of jus­tice, and the whole criminal code, except in the case of breaches of the laws of the federal body, are regulated by state laws.@@1 All the twenty-six states have written consti­tutions, formed subsequently to the Revolution, except Rhode Island, which is still governed by the charter grant­ed by Charles II. in 1663. These constitutions are purely republican, though the right of suffrage (for the term *franchise* is inapplicable and odious where voting is a general right, not a special privilege) is restricted in one or two states, and unequally divided in one or two others. In every one of the states, the legislature consists of two chambers, both chosen by direct popular election, except in Maryland, where the senators are chosen by delegatee, ln eighteen states out of the twenty-six, the representa­tives (or members of the lower house, according to our phraseology) are elected annually, and in Tennessee and Louisiana biennially, and in three triennially, viz. in South Carolina, lllinois, and Missouri. The period of service in the senates (or upper houses) varies from one to four years, except in Maryland, where it is five: in some cases one third or one fourth, in others one half, of the members are renewed every year ; in others, one half every two years. In some of the states the right of suffrage was for­merly limited to freeholders or corporations, but by amend­ments in most of the old constitutions these restrictions have been abolished ; and the right of suffrage, though va­riously defined in the different states, is substantially uni­versal in them all, except in New Jersey and Virginia. In these two states, the possession of a small amount of pro­perty still constitutes the citizen's title to vote. In many of the states, there are certain qualifications prescribed for the persons elected. A senator must, in general, be a freeholder, and not under thirty years of age; a represen­tative not under twenty-five. The governors act in some cases with, in others without a council, and hold their of­fices, some for one year, some for two, some for three, but none for more than four years. In all the constitutions recently framed, an express provision is introduced for adopting amendments. The rule generally is, that if any alteration is judged necessary and approved of by two suc­cessive legislatures, it may then be submitted to the people, who appoint a special convention to decide upon it. In some cases it is provided that a convention shall meet pe­riodically to revise the constitution. The existing legisla­ture is always considered as exercising a trust, in the terms of which it has no power to make the smallest change. By this principle, legislation is founded on a clear and rational basis. It gives stability to institutions that might other­wise be the foot-ball of domineering factions; it checks the growth of sinister interests, and, while it affords a safe and easy remedy for grievances, it is so far from being an inlet to rash innovations, that it is the best guarantee against them, as the history of the United States demon­strates. To suffer those who exercise the supreme power of a country to change at pleasure the conditions by which

@@@, Views of the President of the United States on the subject of Internal lmprovements, Laid before Congress 4th May 1822.