

THE  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER,**  
AND  
**NATIONAL RECORDER.**

**VOL. I.      Saturday, January 30, 1819.      No. 5.**

**Internal Improvement.**

[The plan of a Board of Commissioners for Internal Improvement, is calculated to be of great benefit. If they shall sit permanently, any proposition from a company or individuals for such purposes, can be submitted to them at once; and as their attention will not be diverted to other objects, they will be enabled to expedite every useful project, and will have the means of deciding on the ineligibility of any, with more facility than the legislature, whose time will be thus saved. If the Board be judiciously selected, their recommendation would always carry weight, and perhaps it might be advantageous, if their powers should be extended to authorize them to subscribe the funds of the state to a limited amount. The Board of Public Works in Virginia, established for similar purposes, have considerable discretionary power, and seem to have exercised it with great effect.]

*From the Harrisburg Chronicle, Jan. 18.*

On Wednesday last, in the House of Representatives, Mr Lehman, from the committee on roads and inland navigation, reported a bill, entitled "An act providing for the appointment of a board of commissioners, &c."

The first section of this bill provides for the appointment of a board of commissioners to be named in the bill, to consider and digest plans relative to internal improvement.

The 2d, 3d, 4th and 5th sections direct a survey of the territory which separates the different navigable streams of the state; levels, &c. to be taken; plans, drafts, and models to be executed; quantity of water upon the different le-

vels to be ascertained; estimates of expense to be made; report to be made to the legislature, &c.

The 6th section authorises the commissioners to appoint agents, surveyors, &c.

The 7th section pledges and appropriates ——— dollars annually for ten years, in aid of roads, bridges, canals, &c. The money to be raised by the sale of bank stock, by the collection of arrearages due for lands, or by a loan on the credit of the state.

The 8th section provides for the reception of proposals to contract for carrying the purposes of the bill into execution.

The 9th section directs the commissioners to ascertain, as early as possible, the terms upon which the different turnpike companies will allow wagons with wheels of different widths, to and from the city of Philadelphia, to pass toll free.

The 10th provides a compensation for the commissioners, &c.

*From a Reading Paper.*

"Our northern turnpike, from the permanent bridge at Berwick, has progressed beyond expectation. Thirty-four miles have been completed this season, and waiting the inspection of commissioners, to be appointed by the governor. The exertions of the managers for the company, have enabled the contractors to perform in one season, more than could have been expected in two. This turn-

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which was continued round the grave, and had a very solemn and impressive effect. When it was finished, the preacher ( a "coloured" man) delivered a discourse. As might have been expected, it was full of errors of language, but the ludicrous effect of some of them was effectually counteracted by many strokes of pathos. In speaking of the last moments of the deceased, he expressed himself with much feeling, and I think with more delicacy than I have usually witnessed. His address to those around him was well calculated to produce an effect upon them, and appeared to do so. One sentence I particularly remember: "The greatest text is an open sepulchre, and the loudest voice that can be addressed to you will soon be heard on the boards of the coffin!"

A. B. S.

Statistics.

BOSTON BILL OF MORTALITY.

Abstract of the Bill of Mortality for the town of Boston, from the 31st December, 1817, to the 31st December, 1818, agreeably to the record kept at the Health Office.

The deaths were caused by diseases and casualties, as follows:

Abscesses	5	Brought over	543
Accidental	1	Fever Typhus	112
Aneurism	1	Fits	24
Angina Pectoris	5	Gout	1
Apoplexy	9	Gravel	1
Burns	2	Hepatitis	5
Cancer	3	Hernia	1
Casualty	10	Hæmorrhagia	4
Cholera	3	Hooping cough	2
Consumption	138	Hydrocephalus	4
Cramp	1	Infant diseases	156
Croup	5	Inflam. of brain	1
Cynanche Maligna	1	Intemperance	2
Debility	2	Measles	1
Diseases unknown	246	Mortification	4
Drinking cold water	2	Old age	32
Dropsy	23	Palsy	6
Dispepsy	12	Phrenitis	1
Drunkenness	1	Pleurisy	3
Drowned	12	Quinsy	4
Dysentery	4	Rickets	2
Dysury	1	Scalds	3
Fever Bilious	7	Scrofula	2
Intermittent	1	Spasms	6
Inflammatory	5	Still born	44
Nervous	2	Suicide	4
Pulmonic	36	Sudden	12
Putrid	1	Ulcers	1
Puerperal	4		
Carried over	543	Total	971

Of the foregoing		Of the above there		
there were :		died :		
	Males.	Females.		
Under 1 year	83	89	In January	71
From 1 to 2	49	49	February	60
2 to 5	35	22	March	91
5 to 10	18	18	April	79
10 to 20	26	17	May	78
20 to 30	58	52	June	83
30 to 40	57	56	July	75
40 to 50	60	49	August	77
50 to 60	51	38	September	88
60 to 70	36	35	October	104
70 to 80	25	24	November	89
80 to 90	9	11	December	76
90 to 100	2	2		
	509	462		
		509		
Total	971			

Published by order of the Board of Health.  
JAMES ROBINSON, Secretary.

Miscellany.

From the Freeman's Journal.

We have been particularly requested to re-publish the following letter from the late governor M'Kean, written but a short time previous to his decease.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.  
Philadelphia, June 16th, 1817.

Messrs. Wm. M'Corkle and Son,  
GENTLEMEN—Several applications having been recently made to me, to state the errors which I had observed, and often mentioned, in the publications of the names of the members of the Continental Congress, who declared in favour of the independence of the United States, on the fourth of July, 1776— I have not, at present, sufficient health and leisure to reply severally to each application. There can be but one correct statement of facts: one public statement, therefore, through the press, will serve the purpose of the gentlemen who have made the request, and may also give satisfaction to the minds of others, who have turned their thoughts upon the subject. If I am correct in my statement, it may be of use to future historians; if not, my errors can be readily corrected. I wish, therefore, by means of your paper, to make the following statement of the facts within my knowledge, relative to the subject of inquiry.  
On Monday, the first day of July, 1776, the arguments in Congress for and against the Declaration of Independence having been exhausted, and the measure fully considered, the Congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole; the question was put by the

chairman, and all the *States* voted in the affirmative except Pennsylvania, which was in the negative, and Delaware, which was equally divided. Pennsylvania, at that time, had seven members, viz. John Morton, Benjamin Franklin, James Wilson, John Dickinson, Robert Morris, Thomas Willing, and Charles Humphreys. All were present on the first of July, and the three first named voted for the Declaration of Independence, the remaining four against it. The state of Delaware had three members, Cæsar Rodney, George Read, and myself. George Read, and I, were present. I voted for it, George Read against it. When the president resumed the chair, the chairman of the committee of the whole made his report, which was not acted upon until Thursday, the 4th of July. In the mean time, I had written to press the attention of Cæsar Rodney, the third delegate from Delaware, who appeared early on that day at the State House, in this place. When the Congress assembled, the question was put on the report of the committee of the whole, and approved by every *State*. Of the members from Pennsylvania, the three first, as before, voted in the affirmative, and the two last in the negative. John Dickinson and Robert Morris were not present, and did not take their seats on that day. Cæsar Rodney, for the state of Delaware, voted with me in the affirmative, and George Read in the negative.

Some months after this, I saw printed publications of the names of those gentlemen, who had, as it was said, voted for the Declaration of Independence, and observed, that my own name was omitted. I was not a little surprised at, nor could I account for the omission; because I knew that on the 24th of June preceding, the deputies from the committees of Pennsylvania, assembled in provincial conference, held at the Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia, which had met on the 18th, and chosen me their president, had unanimously declared their willingness to concur in a vote of the Congress, declaring the United Colonies free and independent states, and had ordered their declaration to be signed, and their president to deliver it in to Congress, which accordingly I did the day following: I knew also that a regiment of associators, of which I was colonel, had, at the end of May before, unanimously made the same declaration.—These circumstances were mentioned, at the time, to gentlemen of my acquaintance. The error remained uncorrected till the year 1781, when I was appointed to publish the laws of Pennsylvania, to which I prefixed the Declaration of Independence, and inserted my own name, with the names of my colleagues. Afterwards, in 1797, when the late A. J. Dallas, esq. then secretary of the commonwealth, was appointed to publish an edition of the laws, on comparing the names published as subscribed to the Declaration of Independence, he observed a variance, and the omission, in some publications, of the name of Thomas M'Kean; having procured a certificate from the secretary of state, that the name of Tho-

mas M'Kean was affixed in his own hand, writing to the original Declaration of Independence, though omitted in the journals of Congress; Mr. Dallas then requested an explanation of this circumstance from me, and from my answer to this application, the following extracts were taken and published by Mr. Dallas, in the appendix to the first volume of his edition of the laws.

“For several years past I have been taught to think less unfavourably of scepticism than formerly. So many things have been misrepresented, misstated, and erroneously printed (with seeming authenticity) under my own eye, as in my opinion to render those who doubt of every thing, not altogether excusable. The publication of the Declaration of Independence on the 4th day of July, 1776, as printed in the journals of Congress, vol. 2, page 242, &c. and also in the acts of most public bodies since, so far as respects the names of the delegates or deputies who made that declaration, has led to the above reflection. By the printed publications referred to, it would appear as if the fifty-five gentlemen, whose names are there printed, and none other, were on that day personally present in Congress, and assenting to the declaration; whereas the truth is otherwise. The following gentlemen were not members on the 4th of July, 1776, namely, Matthew Thornton, Benjamin Rush, George Clymer, James Smith, George Taylor, and George Ross, esquires. The five last named were not chosen delegates until the 20th of that month; the first, not until the 12th day of September following, nor did he take his seat in Congress, until the 4th of November, which was four months after. The journals of Congress, vol. 2d, pages 277 and 442, as well as those of the Assembly of the state of Pennsylvania, page 53, and of the General Assembly of New Hampshire, establish these facts. Although the six gentlemen named, had been very active in the American cause, and some of them, to my own knowledge, warmly in favour of its independence, previous to the day on which it was declared, yet I personally know that none of them were in Congress on that day.

“Modesty should not rob any man of his just honour, when by that honour, his modesty cannot be offended. My name is not in the printed journals of Congress, as a party to the Declaration of Independence, and this, like an error in the first concoction, has vitiated most of the subsequent publications, and yet the fact is, that I was then a member of Congress for the state of Delaware, was personally present in Congress, and voted in favour of independence on the 4th day of July, 1776, and signed the Declaration, after it had been engrossed on parchment, where my name, in my own hand writing, still appears. Henry Wisner, of the state of New York, was also in Congress, and voted for independence.

“I do not know how the misstatement in the printed journals has happened. The ma-

manuscript public journal has no names annexed to the Declaration of Independence, nor has the secret journal; but it appears by the latter, that on the 19th day of July, 1776, the Congress directed that it should be engrossed on parchment, and signed by every member, and that it was so produced on the 2d of August, and signed. This is interlined in the secret journal, in the hand writing of Charles Thompson, esq. the secretary. The present secretary of state of the United States, and myself, have lately inspected the journals, and seen this. The journal was first printed by Mr. John Dunlap, in 1778, and probably, copies, with the names then signed to it, were printed in August, 1776, and that Mr. Dunlap printed the names from one of them."

Your most obedient servant,

THOS. M'KEAN.

*Philadelphia, January 30.*

The National Intelligencer of the 23d inst. states, that Col. Trumbull's Painting was exhibiting in this city, "*in the very room, where, more than forty years ago, that most important subject was considered and adopted.*" We regret that this is not exactly correct. Congress sat in the *eastern*, and the picture was exhibited in the *western* room of the old State House. A few months ago, that venerable apartment underwent alterations and repairs, which made it more convenient for the administration of justice, but disfigured that ancient appearance which should have been preserved as long as it would last.

We have heard of an American gentleman who purchased an antique dug from the ruins of Herculaneum. It was a head of Cleopatra, and was set in massy gold. The setting was not very *fashionable*, and the gentleman had it taken off, and affixed the stone to a very handsome watch seal.

FROM THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

## STATE OF THE INDIAN TRIBES.

*To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled:*

The memorial of the representatives of the religious society of Friends in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the eastern parts of Maryland, respectfully sheweth—

That, from the period of the emigration of our ancestors to this country, a tender concern hath been cherished and promoted among us, for the instruction and civilization of the Indian natives, endeavouring, as occasions presented, to manifest the grateful sense we entertained, of the truly hospitable reception and generous treatment they extended to those early settlers of this, then a wilderness land.

Viewing them as a class of fellow men, whose neglected and untutored state formed strong claims upon the sympathy, charity, and forbearance of the white inhabitants, our desires for their welfare have been unabated; and, for many years, with the approbation of the executive department, we have been engaged in exertions to introduce, more particularly amongst those nations on the north western frontier, such a knowledge of agriculture, and some of the most necessary mechanic arts, as would enable them to procure ample supplies for their comfortable subsistence, and gradually prepare them for becoming useful citizens; towards which they are advancing with encouraging success:—Therefore, from long experience, we can confidently state, that they are a people whose perceptions are strong, lively, and susceptible of great improvement.

With deep concern, we have observed a disposition spreading in the United States, to consider them as an incumbrance in the community, and their residence within our borders as an obstruction to the progressive improvements and opulence of the nation. Hence it is, that some, through alluring prospects, calculated for the increase of private emolument, seek to evade or lay waste the salutary restrictions which have been wisely provided for the regulation of trade, and to prevent the free introduction of ardent spirits among them; which, if they should effect, would, we believe, though gradually, yet ultimately, produce their entire extinction.

The preservation and existence of nations and governments, however exalted in the scale of power, must depend upon the providence of the Almighty; but when prompted by ambition, a thirst for aggrandizement, they have swerved from the principles of righteousness and