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Adjournment of the New Hampshire Convention

John Sullivan to Nicholas Gilman Durham, N.H., 28 February 1788

By my Last I promised to inform you of the proceedings in our Convention; but the pen of a Clarendon; & the pencil of a Hogarth would fall infinitely short of the performance—know then sir that we assembled at Exeter to amount of one hundred; Thirty of whom were in favor of the proposed system of Government & the Residue obstinately bent against it: This was a faint Resemblance of the battle of Arbela between Alexander & Darius; on the one side was a small number of veteran Troops; on the other a motley mixture of Ancient Toreys, friends to paper money, Tender Laws, Insurrections &c persons in Debt, distress, & poverty, either real or Imaginary; men of blind piety, Hypocrites, & Bankrupts; together with Many honest men bound by Instructions to vote against the Constitution at all Events, notwithstanding the struggles of Conscience & the voice of their own Judgment. Thus arranged, & thus Divided, we entered the field of Action; The Battle continued nine Days, when we found that the numbers were nearly equal, reckoning on the side of the opposition all those who were Instructed to vote against the plan; The Instructed Gentlemen to the amount of twenty or upward were convinced, & I trust converted; and begged an adjournment that they might return & Convert their Constituents, or at Least obtain License to Act their own Judgments, which was agreed to; but unfortunately the plan was altered, & the Convention is to meet at Concord on the Third wednesday of June next: when I will venture to predict that it will be agreed to by three Quarters of the members present. — Thus stands matters in New Hampshire at present. I reced a Letter this Day from mr wingate respecting money for you & him¹ and must beg Leave to refer you to his Letter which goes with this for yr satisfaction on that head, as the messenger who carries this to the office is pulling me by the Elbow while I am writing, & will only allow me time to assure you that I am with the most perfect regard sir your most obedt Servt.

1. Paine Wingate and Gilman were serving together in Congress.

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