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REMARKS on the Amendments to the Federal Constitution, proposed by the Conventions of Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, New-York, Virginia, South and North-Carolina, with the minorities of Pennsylvania and Maryland, by a FOREIGN SPECTATOR.

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The following miscellaneous amendments are also relative to federal elections. *That no persons, except natural born citizens, or such as were citizens on or before the 4th day of July 1776, or such as held commissions under the United States during the war, and have, at any time, since the 4th of July 1776, become citizens of one or other of the United States, and who shall be freeholders, shall be eligible to the places of president, vice-president, or members of either house of the congress of the United States.* Convention of New-York 5th am. This excludes all foreigners that have become citizens after the declaration of independency, or shall for the future be naturalized; except such as held commissions, &c.

By the 1st sect. 2d art. "No person is eligible to the office of president, except he has been fourteen years a resident within the United States, and is a natural born citizen, or was a citizen at the adoption of the constitution." This provision will before a half a century secure the supreme magistracy of the nation to natural born citizens; and in the mean time effectually guard it from the intrigues of powerful foreigners: no such, I believe, were citizens last year, none certainly have been residents 14 years.

The mode of electing the vice-president virtually requires the same qualifications for this office, same sect. and art. Representatives and senators must, when elected, have been citizens of the United States seven and nine years respectively. Sensible and virtuous persons may in that time acquire a sufficient knowledge of and affection for the country, and give satisfactory proofs of their merit. I warmly recommend a prudent distrust of strangers; persuaded that few men of respectable character expatiate themselves, and that America suffers extremely from the scum of Europe that continually floats in upon her. Nevertheless an absolute exclusion from offices of high trust is too rigid. If a nation can be eminently served by adopted citizens, why should they not share the noblest privileges of citizenship? This country has found several wise and brave sons among those who were not born Americans, and may hereafter; if it has not proved a step-mother to such; why should it for the future? The rising empire of this western world may under a good administration have charms to attract persons of great abilities and fortunes; an eventual participation of its honors is an additional motive, and pledge of attachment. The natural jealousy of native citizens is more-over in every country an effectual check on the ambition of those who are not.

That the authority given to the executives of the states to fill the vacancies of senators, be abolished, and that such vacancies be filled by the respective legislatures. Convention of New-York 18th am. The constitution impowers the executives to fill only those vacancies which happen during the recess of the legislature of any state, by temporary appointments until the next meeting of the same, which shall then fill such vacancies.’ 3d sect. 1st art. This speaks for itself. Such authority cannot be dangerous; but is necessary, because the states have an equal and small representation in the senate.

That the legislatures of the respective states may recall their senators or either of them, and elect others in their stead, to serve the remainder of the time for which the senators so recalled were appointed. Convention of New-York, 16th am. The senators are not altogether agents for their own state, but also trustees for the United States. Though each state has two senators, these vote separately, and the distinction of states is so far lost; consequently a state has not a right to recall a senator, if he is agreeable to the United States. If a senator may prejudice the interest of his own state by too federal sentiments, may he not also by too great partiality for it injure the United States? The greater states have generously descended to a level with the small in the senate; let not this generosity be lessened or undervalued on either side by a jealousy which can have no good effect!

That no person be eligible for a senator for more than six years in any term of twelve years, convention of New-York 16th am. *That no person shall be eligible to the office of president of the United States a third time,* ditto 20th am. *That no person shall be capable of being president of the United states for more than eight years in any term of sixteen years.* Convention of Virginia and North Carolina, 13th and 14th am.

Republican jealousy goes too far when it forces the people to discharge magistrates in whom they have full confidence, and whose services may in certain conjunctures be indispensable. The office of president is a federal trust of such importance, that, although several citizens may, and indeed ought to be qualified for it, yet few perhaps will have the same confidential respect and affection from all parties. I therefore hesitate not to defend an unlimited re-eligibility on these principles, at least till the government shall be firmly established.

An unpopular president or senator have no means to procure a re-election. The excellent mode of electing the first will almost infallibly secure a good choice.^(a) The latter must also be well chosen, while the legislatures of the respective states are uncorrupted: the superintendance of Congress over their election cannot be prejudicial.^(b) Every thinking person may easily comprehend, that a plot between the president and the whole congress, to secure a re-election, would not be dangerous, while they could not command the pockets of the people; for what other treasury would be competent to buy the nation repeatedly?^(c)

(a) *See number 14.*

(b) *Number 24.*

(c) *The representatives are chosen for two years, the president every fourth, and one third of the senate every second year.*

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