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Moderatus No. IV *Boston Gazette*, 11 January 1790

Messieurs PRINTERS, As I intended only general observations, it cannot be expected that I should make critical ones. I have therefore designated the parties by the names commonly given them, though it must be evident, to even a superficial observer, that their conduct hath not corresponded with their nominal character, especially in the last distinction of parties into Federal and Antifederal;—for there certainly is a wide and essential difference between a number of *free and sovereign states* leaguering themselves together for certain Purpose, which they may suppose to be more easily and safely attained in this way than another, and the *People* of those several states forming a government which, in its operation, shall supercede the acts, and indeed destroy in great measure the sovereignty of the respective states.—Without entering into arguments to prove that this is the tendency of the present government of the United States, it is sufficient for my purpose to say, that it appears, from the conduct of the Federalists so called, that this is *their* opinion;—witness the mock proclamation lately issued, by which it is implicitly declared that a state, with reference to the whole, is no better or greater in its privileges and powers, than a parish is with respect to its state.—Had this proclamation appeared in almost any other paper than it did, I should not have suspected a Federalist as being the author, it is so far beside their usual cunning & address;—but no man is alike wary at all hours.—However they have not yet wholly lost their art and cunning;—if they had it would be more difficult to account for their remarkable silence of late. I observed in my first paper, that it was matter of joy and satisfaction to me, that there were parties in the state, and my reason is this, that so long as there are parties, each will endeavour to stimulate the people in their own favor, and by these means keep alive a spirit of thinking and of enquiry among them, highly conducive to their good and preventive of any ill design formed against their privileges.—Of this effect of parties the Federalists are truly sensible; they therefore, having obtained their grand point in the adoption of the constitution, and election of such persons as have produced no amendments but the propositions, before referred to as such, and yet to be considered, now affect a silence as though nothing remained to be done or even considered by the people. The government being once set in motion, will proceed in its operations, and the people need give themselves no more concern respecting it. If their silence would produce this desired effect, then indeed in a short time it would be needless for the people to trouble themselves about it; but happily the wolf may be discovered through the sheep’s cloathing.—There is a kind of impatience with them, to arrive where they wish, that will not suffer them to use all the caution and art which they at sometimes appear to be masters of,—

some proclamation or paragraph—writer will come forward and betray their too eager expectations. These observations I think it not impertinent to make, before I proceed to the subject of amendments, to awaken in the minds of the people, their usual attention to the affairs of government, their commendable jealousy of and watchfulness over the conduct of their servants in office, and that spirit of free enquiry into their rights and privileges, heretofore so happily exercised by them, but which of late, I fear, have not had their proper influence. I hope never to see the time when the people shall feel themselves so little interested in the *operations* of government, however good and estimable the *form* of it may be, as to suffer only a *few* to have the management and guidance thereof. These observations may also serve for an apology for a writer, who only wishes to excite those sentiments in the people, which may lead them to due consideration & reflection, and to a more thorough attention to and examination of the proceedings of government than he is capable of affording. —The only merit the writer claims is that of good intentions, and if, by the few *general* remarks, which he already has, and probably hereafter may make, a *proper* spirit of enquiry and investigation shall be excited, he will be fully compensated. I should now, as I proposed in my last, have proceeded to the subject of amendments, but the preceding observations appeared to me in a degree necessary previous thereto, to prepare the minds of the people to think and reflect, as what I shall observe will be diffusive and desultory.

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