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2-16-1826

N.H. Patriot, Feb. 16, 1826

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Our readers will recollect the report of the Committee of Claims in Congress on the petition of Capt. ISAAC HODSDON, published a few weeks since. This report divulged facts in relation to the management of an infuriated Judiciary—a Judiciary created by the famous Legislature of 1813, by trampling under foot the Constitution—which must forever disgrace the party giving that Judiciary its sanction. Mr. Daniel Webster is not chairman of the Committee of Claims in Congress: of course the petition of Capt. Hodsdon was not by that committee treated as was the petition of President Cooper asking remuneration for suffering under the “Sedition Law,” by the Judiciary Committee. The publication of the report of the case of Capt. Hodsdon seems to have aroused all the “No Party” fury. The following may be taken as a sample from the last *Concord Register*:

“We should say that it [the arrest of smugglers and traitors trading with the enemy] rendered him [Capt. Hodsdon] as worthy a subject of *prosecution* as ever peeped thro’ the perforations of a pillory, or the lattice of a “stone jug”—and had not a violent fever then agitated the pulse of the body politic, and disqualified men to judge coolly and correctly—this upstart tyrant had not ventured among the republicans [meaning the aforesaid smugglers] of New-England, to march up and take the very laws by the beard. The SCOUNDREL shut up republican citizens with all the effrontery of Caius Verres—and with as little ceremony as he would pen his pigs or tie up *hiscattle*.”

“The Supreme Court of N. H. ventured to exercise some legal authority, without being dazzled into submission by the glitter of the *unground and unstained* cutlass of Captain Hodsdon! “Father Antic the Law” firmly got the grip of the Cap’tain, and its penalties elicited some of his *ill earned wages* in the shape of fines and costs; and it happened to him that he “felt the” stricture of its “halter” with no “good opinion of it,” and he now calls on the injured and insulted people of the United States to refund the penalties with interest! And the *sagacious committee* report “that he is entitled to relief both on *principle* and *precedent*.” On what *principle*, unless it be that whatever the law exacts of rogues in penalty, should be considered as borrowed money—it is difficult to conjecture; or on what *precedent*, unless some Stephen Burroughs has heretofore thus called in his dues, “for money lent and accommodated” to the government.”

“If Congress should refund this money to Hodsdon, with his travel and attendance, as he boldly claims, *all rogues hereafter*, especially those whose trade is that of “*stopping*” travellers, may, if detected and punished, consider their pains and penalties as only *mesjies* vested in the public funds, to be *dr^{own}ed* out with interest, whenever a scarcity of *pay* reduces them to straits;—and we may expect to see the galleries of our State Legislature thronged with the military gentlemen of *half-uniform*, pressing *their claims* for “*labor done and performed*” for government in the State Prison.” !!

After calmly perusing the foregoing extracts—after witnessing the bitterness of feeling towards an officer of the government who did his duty in stopping and arresting traitors that were aiding the public enemy—after witnessing the present hatred and contempt for a committee of Congress, which, now that party spirit is done away, has the independence and magnanimity to report favorably on the petition of an officer who was illegally arrested and fined for executing the orders of his superior officer, and which orders were in conformity to law and right;—will it now be pretended that the party which protected traitors during the late war have given over one jot or tittle of their hostility towards the supporters of the country at that time?