

to those acquainted with the present condition of the western States. But the general assembly will state that a perseverance in the present system manifestly appears to them to be equivalent to a declaration on the part of Congress that it will not sell or dispose of nine-tenths of the public lands in this State; and this general assembly cannot refrain from declaring that it views such refusal as an infringement of the compact between the United States and this State; and that the State of Missouri never could have been brought to consent not to tax the lands of the United States whilst unsold; and not to tax the lands sold until five years thereafter, if it had been understood by the contracting parties that a system was to be pursued which would prevent nine-tenths of those lands from ever becoming the property of persons in whose hands they might be taxed. The State of Missouri views, with deep concern, a policy pursued by the general government in the disposal of the public lands. In demanding now for refuse lands, the largest part of which are not worth ten cents per acre, the full price of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre, is, to all practical purposes, raising the prices of the public lands; and that it has the obvious effect of preventing the population of the new States cannot be denied. The general government has absolutely reserved from sale upwards of seven hundred acres of land, under a supposition that it contained lead ore. It has reserved from sale all the salt springs belonging to the government, and the lands contiguous thereto; and it has, through the Executive, refused to sell large districts of country supposed to contain iron ore, except in alternate sections, thereby, in effect, refusing the necessary quantity of those lands upon which to erect iron works. The price of lands, when we take into consideration the quality of those lands, and that they are the refuse of many years' sales, is not only raised, but is raised to a price, in most instances, *ten times above their value*. The prices are not only raised far above their value, but hundreds of thousands of acres, containing much of the natural wealth and resources of the State, are altogether reserved from sale. The population of the State is not only prevented, but hundreds of our citizens have left it to seek lands in the Mexican States; and not one-third part of our citizens, where nineteen-twentieths of the domain are unappropriated, are possessed of lands, and the frontier of our infant State much exposed to the depredations of the restless hordes of predatory savages collected thereon by the same government that refuses us the means of strengthening our frontier, by requiring a price for the wild lands far above their value, thereby forcing numbers of our citizens, with their families and effects, to remove to countries beyond the limits of the United States, there to seek lands on terms more reasonable and advantageous than are offered by our government. This general assembly are convinced that the true interests of the United States, as well as the interests of the new States, require a radical change in the system of disposing of the public lands—to sell as rapidly as possible the wild lands, and apply the proceeds of those sales to the extinguishment of the public debt, the interest of which has consumed, and still consumes, so large a portion of the revenue—to give a home to millions of citizens, and attach them to the soil and institutions of the country—to increase the wealth and strength of the United States, and consequently the ability to bear the burdens of government in times of war or other public calamity—to augment the revenue of the United States, by increasing the consumption of foreign goods on which duties are paid, and the increase of the revenue of the States in which the public lands lie, are blessings and advantages which must arise from a change in the system of disposing of the public lands, and which are surely not to be treated lightly by a wise nation. This general assembly believe that the great objects hereinbefore enumerated can best be attained, and the evils complained of can most readily be obviated, by graduating the prices of the public lands, by making donations of land to actual settlers, and by ceding the refuse lands to the States in which they lie, in the manner proposed by the bill at the last session of Congress, for settlement and cultivation, and to advance the great interests of education and internal improvement. This general assembly, therefore, do most earnestly recommend to the justice, wisdom, and liberality of Congress, the passage of a law to effect those great objects.

JOHN THORNTON,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
DANIEL DUNKLIN,
President of the Senate.

Approved December 23, 1828.

JOHN MILLER

20TH CONGRESS.]

No. 727.

[2D SESSION.]

APPLICATION OF LOUISIANA FOR A CESSION OF THE PUBLIC LANDS THEREIN TO THAT STATE.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE JANUARY 26, 1829.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Louisiana in general assembly convened, That it is deemed a matter of the utmost importance to the interests of the State that it should have and possess the sole and exclusive jurisdiction of the unappropriated lands within its limits, in order that internal improvements may be promoted and emigration increased.

Resolved, That while the federal government shall continue to claim sovereignty over a large portion of the soil of the State, with its tardy operations in disposing of the same to individuals, and the high prices stipulated in the terms of entry, we shall continue to behold the younger members of this republic outstripping us in population, improvements, and the arts.

Resolved, That inasmuch as a portion of our citizens hold lands under adverse and unsettled titles, the vital object of defence against the inundation of our streams, and the object common to man of rendering better his condition, are both retarded and repressed.

Resolved, That our senators in Congress be instructed, and our representatives requested, to exert their utmost abilities to obtain from the federal government a cession to this State of the public and unappropriated lands claimed by the United States, at as early a period and on such terms as may be beneficial to the State and advantageous to our citizens.

Resolved, That the governor of the State be requested to transmit a copy of these resolutions to each of our senators and representatives in Congress.

Approved December 22, 1828.

A. B. ROMAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.
A. BEAUVAIS,
President of the Senate.

P. DERBIGNY,
Governor of the State of Louisiana.

20TH CONGRESS.]

No. 728.

[2D SESSION.]

APPLICATION FOR REMISSION OF PART OF THE PRICE OF LAND PURCHASED IN ALABAMA.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES JANUARY 27, 1829.

Mr. HUNT, from the Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the petition of Allen Glover and Geo. S. Gaines, reported:

That the petitioners represent that at a public sale of lands held at the land office at St. Stephen's, in Alabama, in the year of our Lord 1819, they became the purchasers of public lands, at prices far beyond their real value, for the purpose of settlement and cultivation; that having, in the time of high speculation, made these purchases, they determined nevertheless to complete the payment of all the instalments, although at the great sacrifice of their property; that soon after their purchase, Congress reduced the price of the public lands, and have since passed several laws in favor of those who purchased under the credit system; and they pray for some relief from the justice and liberality of Congress.

The committee are aware that the petitioners and many others may have given and paid much more for lands that were purchased some ten or twelve years ago than they are worth at this time. The market price of land, as well as of most other kinds of property, is fluctuating and beyond the control of Congress. When the lands are bought at low prices, and the value is enhanced, the purchasers will derive the benefit; and when the value is depreciated they must, as a general rule, sustain the loss. It must be lamented that those industrious citizens who purchase the public lands for the purposes of cultivation should sustain loss and embarrassment; yet having paid for them, the government would find almost insuperable difficulties in undertaking to refund the money, or to afford other relief. The committee recommend the following resolution:

Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioners be not granted.

20TH CONGRESS.]

No. 729.

[2D SESSION.]

TO REFUND MONEY PAID FOR LAND WHICH WAS HELD UNDER A SPANISH GRANT.

COMMUNICATED TO THE SENATE JANUARY 29, 1829.

Mr. SMITH, of South Carolina, from the Committee on Private Lands, to whom was referred the petition of Pierre Leglise, reported:

That the petitioner was the owner of a tract of land of five arpents front and forty deep, which was part of a tract of fifty arpents front, granted by the Spanish government, which was confirmed by the commissioners. But the commissioners not recollecting that this land was part of a confirmed title, and seeing no evidence of occupation, did not confirm the claimant in his title to the five arpents; in consequence of which, he was obliged to enter his land as a pre-emption in order to save his land, houses, and other improvements, for which he paid \$338 to the government.

The committee are of opinion that the money ought to be refunded, and report a bill.