

applicable to the words in their restricted signification, in which its laws are made, under the apprehension, it may be, of overstepping the limits of a compact, by which the machinery of their Government and institutions are held together, or of infringing the asserted rights, that each intersection of this vast confederacy claims to exercise under their peculiar organization.

The recent history of America has familiarised us with the many difficulties proceeding from this source; the want of harmony and general inefficiency of the laws—their instability—the uncertainty that every varying interpretation of their more positive meaning so necessarily create, and which has reduced the supreme power of these states to the decrepid state of imbecility and weakness, of which this late instance furnishes us with another and sufficient example.

The reductions made in the charge of letter conveyance by the expresses of private companies, occasioned a general anxiety for a further diminution of this very onerous tax. The example of England, in her late Post-Office reform, and conversion to the penny postage system, excited the people to demand a similar boon from Congress, and to which petitions were presented from all parts of the Republic, calling loudly for the alteration. The law, as it then stood, was, by the result of the legal decisions to which we have referred, no longer able to secure to the general Government the exclusive right of conveyance of the United States