

amendments were calculated to secure. On examining the existing laws upon the subject of ferries, and the operation of those laws for many years, we could not discover that any inconveniences prevailed, except perhaps from the limitation of the power of the county courts in the establishment of public ferries at places where such undertakings have been used since the passage of the original act, and from the excess of power given over the property of owners or possessors in case of refusal or disability to keep or rent the ferries attached to their soil. These inconveniences are proposed to be remedied by the amendments of the senate; in all other respects the provisions of the present acts are preserved, without material alteration, and were comprised into one system for more general convenience. We saw no good reason for divesting the county courts of the power heretofore given them upon this subject; and therefore all the amendments relating to this branch of the bill, only proposed to leave the authority where it has all along subsisted; we perceived that the provisions of the existing laws were intended to prevent monopolies, and to excite a valuable competition among different persons licensed at the same ferry; and approving of this policy, we thought it proper to preserve it in the formation of a new law. It must be conceded, that independently of any law, every citizen has a right to use a public highway leading to any water, and also a right to cross that water, and to land upon the highway on the opposite shore; he has of course a right to employ a boat and labourers for this purpose, and also for the accommodation of others who may desire to pass over the same water; and this right is now restrained in no other degree than has become necessary for public convenience, by the due regulation of ferries. Upon the whole, if you will be pleased to compare the amendments with the provisions of the existing laws, you will find that nothing affecting the rights of any individual whatsoever has been proposed by the senate; on the contrary, you will perceive, by a careful attention to the provisions of the proposed bill as originated by the house of delegates, that the right or privilege of keeping a public or county ferry was limited to the proprietor of the soil binding on the water, to the exclusion of all other persons; a right or privilege clearly calculated to create a monopoly, contrary to the spirit of the bill of rights, and to prevent that competition so obviously useful to the community. For these reasons we cannot recede from our amendments, and hence, we presume, you will acquiesce with our desire to decline the conference which you have proposed.

By order,

A. VAN-HORN, clk.

The resolution in favour of the adjutant-general was read the second time and assented to.

The bill, entitled, An act to provide for the administration of justice in cases of crimes and misdemeanors in the city and county of Baltimore, was read the second time and will pass.

The resolution in favour of Gabriel Duvall, and others, was read the second time by especial order and assented to.

The bill, entitled, An act to make permanent and to continue the acts of assembly therein mentioned, was read the second time by especial order and will pass.

The three bills, message, and bill mentioned therein, and two resolutions next before mentioned, and the bill, entitled, An act to authorize the laying out a public road from Thomas Under Hill's mill, to intersect the road leading from John Neale's to John Coxe's, in Harford county, and the bill, entitled, An act to establish an academy at Easton, in Talbot county, were sent to the house of delegates by the clerk.

The resolution in favour of James Steele, and others, was read the second time and dissented from.

The clerk of the house of delegates delivers to the clerk of the senate a bill, entitled, An act for the punishment of horse-stealers and other offenders, thus endorsed; "By the house of delegates, December 16, 1799: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

"By the house of delegates, December 28, 1799: Read the second time and will pass.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk."

A bill, entitled, An act for the benefit of John Shewman, of Washington county, thus endorsed; "By the house of delegates, December 27, 1799: Read the first and second time by especial order and will pass.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk."

A bill, entitled, An act to lay out and open a public road in the upper part of Queen-Anne's county, thus endorsed; "By the house of delegates, December 27, 1799: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

"By the house of delegates, December 27, 1799: Read the second time by especial order and will pass.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk."

A bill, entitled, An act to authorize certain commissioners to lay off a town in Prince-George's county by the name of Van's-Ville, thus endorsed; "By the house of delegates, December 24, 1799: Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

"By the house of delegates, December 28, 1799: Read the second time and will pass.

"By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk."

A bill, entitled, An act annulling the marriage of John Crist, of Frederick county, and Susanna his wife, and a bill, entitled, An act to authorize and empower the justices of the levy court of Prince-George's county to pull down the repository of the records of the register of wills in said county,