

Mr. Quynn brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a bill, entitled, An act to empower Gabriel Lewynn, administrator of Charles Riley, deceased, to sell and dispose of lots of ground in Baltimore-town in Baltimore county; which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. Seney brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a bill, entitled, An act for the relief of Edward Hargadine, a languishing prisoner in Queen-Anne's county gaol; which was read the first and second time by especial order and passed. Sent to the senate by Mr. Seney and Mr. Sewell.

The report on the petition of William Knott was read the second time and concurred with, and leave given to bring in a bill pursuant thereto.

The bill to relieve nonjurors from certain disabilities, was read the second time, and the question put, That the said bill do pass? The yeas and nays being called for by Mr. Beatty and seconded by Mr. Weems appeared as follow:

A F F I R M A T I V E.

Messrs	Bond,	Weems,	Job,	Seney,	Hopper,	Oneale,
	Smyth,	Ridgely,	Brevard,	Coursey,	Keene,	Edwards,
	Cadwalader,	S. Worthington,	Bowie,	Sewell,	Burgefs,	M'Mechen,
	Lloyd,	Sherwood,	Magruder,	Chafe,	Griffith,	Fell.
	B. Worthington,	Hindman,	Kent,	Smithson,		

N E G A T I V E.

Mef.	N. Worthington,	Stone,	Miller,	Duvall,	Norris,	Chapline:
	Brogden,	Courts,	Quynn,	Beatty,	Wheeler,	

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

Mr. Oneale brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a bill, entitled, An act for the relief of William Knott, of Montgomery-county; which was read the first and second time by especial order and passed.

The following message being prepared, was sent to the senate, with the above bills, and the bill to prevent the subjects of an enemy from coming into this state, by Mr. Hopper and Mr. Duvall.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, JANUARY 3, 1783.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOURS,

WE wish you had communicated to us the reasons which induced you to put a negative on the bill to prevent the subjects of an enemy from coming into this state.

We cannot conjecture the cause of your dissent to a prohibition, founded, in our opinion, on the principle of self preservation. We return you the bill, and will briefly assign the motives which influenced us to pass it, and flatter ourselves they will be sufficient, on further consideration, to procure your assent. By the act for naturalization, it was provided, that every person, who shall come into this state, from any nation, kingdom, or state, and renounce his former political connection, and take an oath of allegiance to this government, should thereby become a subject. Since the passage of this law, several subjects of Great-Britain came from that kingdom, and were admitted by the governor and the council to renounce their subjection to the crown of Great-Britain, and to take the oath of allegiance to this state, and thereby entitle themselves to the privileges of citizens. It is doubted whether the general expressions of the law, inviting foreigners of every nation to come and settle among us, can justify the admission of subjects of Great-Britain, or any other power *during the time of war*. At the same session the law passed, the general assembly, by resolve, requested the governor to cause the act to be printed, and dispersed in the different parts of Great-Britain and Ireland. This direction of the legislature has been considered by some, as an invitation to the inhabitants of those kingdoms to accept the offer of becoming subjects of this state. As the law made no exceptions against any subject of an enemy, those who had been the instruments of commencing and prosecuting the war, and even those who left this state before the formation of our government, and to whose arts and misrepresentations the continuance of the war may, in great measure, be imputed, might claim a right under it to come into our state, and become our subjects. There is no limitation as to number, and no discretion lodged any where, to reject the most inveterate of our enemies. The liberty supposed to be granted by the law has been already abused, and we think prudence and policy would dictate an alteration of it. If you think that our honour is engaged to the people of Great-Britain and Ireland, by the circumstance of dispersing the law among them, and that they might justly complain we invited them to come among us, and afterwards, without notice, passed a law, subjecting them to punishment, we imagine this objection might be removed, by commencing the act at some future day. We do not think this necessary, but would rather have a law to prohibit our enemies at some time from coming among us, than to leave it open for ever. We hope the substance of the bill will meet your approbation; and if

S

exceptionable