

is usual in like cases, left blank, to be filled up on the second reading; and consequently, there was nothing on the face of it, as reported, which involved any constitutional question; or which intimated, that such a one was to be propounded. This bill was ordered to be put on its passage, on the first day of February following; but, that day was suffered to pass by, and it was not called up until the 21st of February; when, by a vote of 36 to 26 the blank was filled up with "the sum of twenty-two hundred dollars," as the amount of the Chancellor's salary, and the bill was thus passed, and sent to the Senate.

It will be proper here to recollect, that when the present * Chancellor was appointed, his salary, by the Act of 1798, ch. 86, then, at least, undeniably in force, was fixed at the **601** sum of thirty-four hundred dollars per annum; and that the Act of 1792, ch. 76, had, previously to the year 1798, fixed the Chancellor's salary at the sum of twenty-five hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents; and, consequently, by the passage of this bill, the House of Delegates, practically asserted the power, at once, to reduce the Chancellor's salary below what had been secured to the several Chancellors during the continuance of their commissions for the last thirty-two years.

The Senate conceiving the reduction of the Chancellor's salary, in any form, to be a direct violation of the thirtieth Article of the Declaration of Rights, took up this bill, on the 23d of the same month, and rejected it "unanimously." Thus, at this late day of the session, this great constitutional question, relative to the security of judicial salaries, was, for the first time, fully and openly presented to the Assembly; and the two Houses were fairly at issue.

On the 25th day of February, the delegates passed the civil list bill, in which they reduced the Chancellor's salary to twenty-five hundred and thirty-four dollars. This was rejected by the Senate on the same ground of its being an unconstitutional reduction. As has been stated, the long special continuing Act, omitting to continue the appropriation for the payment of the Chancellor's salary, having been passed by the delegates, and sent to the Senate on the 26th of February, the very last day of the session, was, by that body, read and rejected at once. On the same last day, the delegates passed a resolution directing, that the Chancellor should be paid the sum of twenty-five hundred and thirty-three dollars and thirty-three cents and one-third of a cent, "as a compensation for his services during the present year." This was a twofold reduction; it was less in amount than the existing salary, and shorter in time than during the continuance of his commission. It was doubly objectionable; and, was therefore rejected by the Senate without hesitation.—The delegates then, immediately introduced and passed a bill continuing all Acts, in general terms,