

But, if those Acts leave any doubt upon the mind as to the meaning and intention of the delegates, that doubt must be completely removed by an attentive perusal of their, before recited, message of the 26th of February, returning the general continuing Act. In that message there is no such thought expressed as, that they could not constitutionally repeal a permanent Act, fixing the Chancellor's salary: it is not there even intimated, that they only found themselves at liberty to reduce that salary, because it was given by the Act of 1798, which Act they believed to be temporary; nor is it to be inferred, from anything said or done by the delegates, as recorded, that they understood, that if the Act of 1798 were suffered to expire, the Act of 1792 would be virtually revived; and that it was their intention, in that way, to reduce the Chancellor's salary. On the contrary, the Senate having complained, in their message of the 26th of February, that "at the very moment they were about closing the session, when many of their members were absent who were known to have been opposed to any reduction of the salary of that officer, they were presented with another bill from the delegates, in which they had thought proper to make no provision to pay the Chancellor any salary whatever." The delegates, in opposition to the Senate, broadly and boldly, without qualification, or restriction, in their message of the same day, say, "we conceive that we cannot in conscience, longer continue to the Chancellor the profuse and enormous salary which he now enjoys; we conceive, that duty requires us to reduce it, and that there is nothing in our Declaration of Rights or Constitution to inhibit it."

Hence, it is most manifest, that the delegates asserted and maintained the absolute right to cut down the Chancellor's salary at their pleasure, without limitation or restriction. And, rather than be disappointed in the exercise of that asserted right, they determined to close the session without making any provision whatever for the payment of the Chancellor's salary. On the other hand, the Senate planted themselves upon the constitutional ground, that the salary given to the Chancellor by the Act of 1798, ch. 86, was, by the Declaration of Rights, secured to him during the continuance of his commission; and, during that period could not be touched.

How it happened that so great a question as this, relative to
605 * the constitutional right of the General Assembly to reduce, or to withhold, at pleasure, the salary of the Chancellor, should have been so postponed, so crowded into the very last day, and thrown in among the fragments and leavings of a long and laborious session, does not very clearly appear. But such was the fact. - The special continuing Act; the Civil List Bill; the general continuing Act; the separate Act and separate resolution for reducing the Chancellor's salary; in short, every