

Act for the payment of the journal of accounts; the low state of the treasury, and the certainty of very great and speedy demands thereon, for effecting the several matters ordered in the course of this session, have induced us to defer the payment of the journal, to a time when the money can be taken from the treasury with less detriment to the public. We are willing to concur with a resolve for paying the clerks and other officers of the two Houses, the sums respectively due to them on the journal." This proposition was at once assented to, and a resolution to that effect was brought in and passed both Houses. This resolution furnishes a most refreshing instance of the lofty, disinterested patriotism of the revolutionary legislators of Maryland. But those were times of peculiar emergency and distress. And this resolution shows how deeply the public exigencies were felt, when legislators themselves found it necessary to set an example of the retrenchment and economy they enjoined, by abandoning their own compensation, while every other officer was paid to the full extent to which the Acts of the State had induced him to expect to receive.

*During the whole of this distressing period, and under every aspect and change of circumstances, the legislators of **637** the Republic appear to have been actuated by a strong sense of justice, and a firm determination to compensate every one for his services to the full extent of their worth, and of the ability of the State to pay. But while they were thus making every possible effort to render to every individual his due, and to comply with the provisions of that Constitution which they had just adopted,

first of March, one and three-quarters, from the first of September, four; in 1779 from the first of March, ten, from the first of September, eighteen; in 1780 from the 18th of March, forty; and after that day as in the above mentioned scale. (*Jour. Cong.* 28th June, 1780; May, 1781, ch. 17, s. 2.) The purchase money of confiscated property and the taxes were, nevertheless, in some cases and in some proportions received in bills of credit and certificates at their nominal value.—(October, 1780, ch. 38, s. 11; May, 1781, ch. 20, 25, 36 and 37, &c.)

These legally established scales of depreciation it must, however, be recollected, relate only to claims against the State; as to private contracts and debts due from one citizen to another, the proper allowance for depreciation seems to have been considered as a fact to be adjusted in each case by the Court of justice before which the case was brought. (*Chapline v. Scott*, 4 H. & McH. 94.) The American army in these years was not only deficient in clothing, but in food. The seasons both in 1779 and 1780, were unfavorable to the crops. The labors of the farmers had often been interrupted by calls for militia duty. The current paper money was so depreciated as to be deemed no equivalent for the productions of the soil. (*Ram. L. Washington*, ch. 6 & 8.) From this state of things it is evident, that the community must have suffered great injustice; and that the public finances being totally deranged, all the operations of the Government connected with this subject must have been very much impeded and perplexed.—(*Message from the Senate, Votes & Pro. H. Del.* 10th May, 1780; *Hoye v. Penn*, ante, 41, note.)