XLVth YEAR.] THE (No. 2252.)

MARYLAND GAZETTE.

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 1790.

Proceedings of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES.

THURSDAY, *February* 11.

A MEMORIAL from the annual meeting of friends at Philadelphia, respecting the slave trade, and praying the interposition of congress for the mitigation of the evils, and final abolition of that pernicious traffic, was presented by Mr. Fitzsimons.—Another memorial on the same subject from the meeting of friends in New-York, was presented by Mr. Lawrence. These were both read, and, on motion that they should be read a second time, in order to their being committed. A warm debate ensued, which ended this day in withdrawing the motion for a second reading. The order of the day was then taken up, and the house went into a committee of the whole on the report of the secretary of the treasury.

Mr. Burke's amendment to the second resolution, which was laid on the table yesterday, was read, viz. "Provided nevertheless, that a discrimination ought to be made between the original holders of public securities and assignees, and that a scale of depreciation be prepared accordingly."

After a few observations on this proposition by Mr. Smith (S. C.) it was withdrawn by Mr. Burke.

A message was received from the senate by their secretary, informing the house, that they have passed a resolve, empowering the president of the United States to appoint three commissioners to inquire into the receipts and expenditures of public monies by, and to examine and adjust the accounts of, the late superintendent of finance, and requesting the concurrence of the house in said resolve.

Mr. Burke's amendment being withdrawn, Mr. Madison entered into a lengthy discussion of the subject of the public debt. Towards the close of his speech he proposed that a discrimination should be made between the original holders of public securities and those who sold them by purchase. His plan is, that the first should be paid the full sum promised, with interest at six per cent. The assignees or purchasers to be paid the highest average sum they have been sold at, and to those who have alienated them the residue, and both to receive the interest at six per cent. Government not to avail itself of the least advantage in the transaction.

Mr. Livermore moved, that the resolution should be amended, by inserting after the word interest, "at a certain rate." This motion was negatived.

Mr. Madison proposed an amendment to the resolution, agreeable to the principles of his speech. This proposition remains to be discussed.

Adjourned.

FRIDAY, *February* 12.

A memorial from the Pennsylvania society, for the abolition of slavery, signed by Benjamin Franklin, president, was read.

Mr. Hartley moved, that the memorials presented yesterday should be read the second time, which was agreed to by a large majority. He then moved, that they should be referred to a select committee—which motion brought on a debate, which lasted till near three o'clock.

The question being called for, Mr. Smith (S. C.) moved that it be determined by ayes and noes: a sufficient number of members appearing in favour of this motion, it was thus determined———

AYES.

Messrs. Ames, Benson, Boudinot, Brown, Cadwalader, Clymer, Fitzsimons, Floyd, Foster, Gale, Gerry, Gilman, Goodhue, Griffin, Grout, Hartley, Hathorne, Heester, Huntington, Lawrence, Lee, Leonard, Livermore, Madison, Moore, P. Muhlenberg, Page, Parker, Patridge, Rensallaer, Schureman, Scott, Sedgwick, Seney, Sherman, Sinnickson, Smith (M.) Sturges, Thatcher, Trumbull, Wadsworth, White, Wynkoop. 43.

NOES.

Messrs. Baldwin, Bland, Burke, Coles, Huger, Jackson, Matthews, Sylvester, Smith (S.C.) Stone, Tucker. 11.

The memorials were referred to a committee of seven members.

On motion of Mr. Lawrence, the petition of G. Bowne, of the society for the abolition of slavery in this city, on the same subject, was read, and referred to the same committee.

The house then adjourned till Monday.

MONDAY, *February* 15.

A message from the president, by Mr. Lear, was received, communicating a vote of the legislature of New-York, acceding to the amendments proposed by congress to the constitution of the United States.

The order of the day being called for, the house went into a committee of the whole, on the report of the secretary of the treasury:

Mr. Baldwin in the chair.

The amendments proposed to the second resolution of Mr. Fitzsimons, by Mr. Scott and Mr. Madison, were the subject of debate.

Mr. Sedgwick, who spoke first, answered the propositions brought forward by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. Madison.)

He said it would be necessary to inquire into that gentleman's premises, and determine whether the consequences flowing from them would be such as the gentleman had mentioned. For his part he did not conceive they were well founded. He had a high respect for the opinions of the gentleman; but he could not conceive that his arguments were well founded. He expatiated largely on the nature of public contracts, and the evidences of property, held in certificates, which were as liable and capable of being transferred as any other property. He reprobated the idea of a composition, and said there was no proper way of discharging a contract but by the specific thing mentioned. If there had been a voluntary failure in government, and if it had been guilty of a breach of contract, it should make compensation. The old government had done all that was in their power; they had made requisitions for aid from the different states, but received little. He then dwelt upon the injustice of with-holding any part from the present holders, as it would be taking from one class to put into the pockets of another. An assumption of such principles as had been laid down in favour of discrimination, would be attended by breach of law, and loosen the credit of government; especially as there was no pretence of inability. The insecurity of government since the peace has made a revolution necessary to render transferrable property more secure.

The propositions of the gentleman were not only impracticable, but might be attended with pernicious consequences.

Mr. Sedgwick then entered into a narrative of the circumstances which would arise, if an attempt was made to trace the original holders; and he said that a new host of speculators would be raised, if such a thing should take place, and it would require whole ages to rectify the frauds which would be practised. He concluded by saying, that if the gentleman's reasoning was to be admitted, the distraction of public faith and public credit would follow: He therefore hoped that this government would follow the example of other nations, by establishing their credit, &c.

Mr. Lawrence, Mr. Smith (S. C.) and Mr. Ames, severally spoke in opposition to Mr. Madison's motion.

Adjourned.

TUESDAY, *February* 16.

Mr. Livermore, from the committee to whom was recommitted the bill for a uniform rule of naturalization throughout the United States, reported one for that purpose.

Mr. Burke, from the committee appointed for the purpose, brought in a bill to promote the progress of useful arts, which was read the first time.

The order of the day was then called for—the same question before the committee as yesterday—the whole day was spent without coming to any determination thereon. Mr. Jackson, Mr. White and Mr. Moore, were for the discrimination; Mr. Benson, Mr. Wadsworth and Mr. Goodhue, were opposed to it.

Adjourned.

WEDNESDAY, *February* 17.

The bill for establishing a uniform mode of naturalization was read a second time, and Tuesday next appointed for its discussion, in a committee of the whole.

The bill for promoting the progress of useful arts was also read a second time, and Wednesday next appointed for its discussion, in a committee of the whole house.

Several petitions were read, among which was one of Jehoika Thomson, an Indian, setting forth, that in crossing rivers on his return to his own country, at the conclusion of the war, he lost the certificate of his pay, and praying relief in the premises. The singularity of the style of the petition excited much pleasantry in the house.

The house then resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the resolution respecting public credit, and after some time spent thereon, rose, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

Adjourned until eleven o'clock to-morrow.

THURSDAY, *February* 18.

On motion of Mr. Goodhue, the petition of Hannah Treat was read the second time, and referred to the secretary at war.

The petition of Jehoika Thompson was read the second time, and referred to a committee consisting of Mr. Sedgwick, Mr. Van Rensallaer and Mr. Moore.

In committee of the whole on the report of the secretary of the treasury; Mr. Madison's motion for a discrimination under consideration———A number of speakers *pro* and *con* this day—which terminated without any decision.

Adjourned.

FRIDAY, *February* 19.

A message from the senate was received by their secretary, with the bill providing for the enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States—returned with sundry amendments.

In committee of the whole on the report of the secretary of the treasury—Mr. Madison's motion for discrimination under consideration—Mr. Scott and Mr. Seney spoke in favour of the proposition—Mr. Livermore, Mr. Gerry, Mr. Bland and Mr. Burke against it—the discussion of the subject was continued till near the moment of adjournment—the committee rose without coming to a vote—and are to resume the business on Monday next.

A letter was read from the commissioners for settling accounts between the United States and individual states, respecting the diminished rate at which the clerks employed in this business are paid—compared with the salaries in the other offices, and requesting the interposition of congress—that they may be placed on an equality.

The resolution of the senate for appointing three commissioners pursuant to the memorial of the honourable Robert Morris, late superintendent of finance, was read—After some debate, whether it should be referred to a select committee, it was ordered, that it lie on the table.

Adjourned till Monday eleven o'clock.

MONDAY, *February* 22.

Mr. Schureman presented a petition of James M'Comb, relative to certain inventions, which was read.

The amendments of the senate to the bill for enumerating the inhabitants of the United States were read.

The enumeration is to commence on the first of August next, and to be completed within nine months—Returns to be made on or before the first of September, 1791. The second schedule was struck out by the senate; these amendments were agreed to, excepting those which reduced the compensations.

The order of the day being called for, the house went into a committee of the whole on the report of the secretary of the treasury.

The question being put upon Mr. Madison's amendment to the second resolution, brought in by Mr. Fitzsimons, it was negatived by a large majority.

The question on the second resolution was then put; several amendments were proposed, which were negatived, and the resolution carried in the affirmative without amendment, viz.

"Resolved, That permanent funds ought to be appropriated for the payment of the interest on, and the gradual discharge of, the domestic debt of the United States."

The third resolution was then read, viz.

"Resolved, That the arrears of interest, including indents issued in payment thereof, ought to be provided for on the same terms with the principal of the said debt."

Mr. Lee proposed an amendment, "that appropriation of the lands in the Western territory be assigned for the purpose of discharging the interest due on the debt of the United States."

This amendment was not seconded.

Mr. Gerry said, that it appeared to him that the indents, in the several state treasuries, and which through negligence have not been paid into the public treasury agreeable to the requisitions of the late congress, ought not to be included in the provision. He moved an amendment to the resolution to that purport: This occasioned considerable debate; but the motion was finally negatived.

The question on the third resolution was then put, and carried without amendment by a large majority.

The fourth resolution was then read, viz.

"Resolved, That the debts of the respective states ought, with the consent of the creditors, to be assumed and provided for by the United States."

It was then moved, that the committee rise, &c. which motion was adopted.

A message from the senate, informing the house that they recede from their amendments to the enumeration bill, which had been disagreed to by the house. Also that the senate have accepted the cession of territory made by the state of North-Carolina, in which acceptance they requested the concurrence of the house.

The memorial of the commissioners for settling accounts between the United States and the individual states, respecting the salaries of the clerks in their office, was read the second time and referred to a committee of three, viz. Messieurs Gerry, Trumbull and Goodhue.

Adjourned.

TUESDAY, *February* 23.

A report from the secretary of the treasury, on the petition of Francis Bailey, was read—this report states, that the invention of the petitioner is typographical