

the bedding and wearing apparel of which the family, "or any of its members," may be possessed, be placed out of the reach of creditors, landlords, and the public.

It is unnecessary, we think, to enlarge on the temptation which such a provision must hold out to improper expense in articles of this description. Nor is it less evil to this class of persons to be apprehended, in our judgment, from the tendency of this provision to diminish their exertions for enabling themselves, by industry and frugality, to pay their rent, their debts, and their taxes. The fear of losing those comforts, to which we have been accustomed, will ever be one of the most powerful stimulants to industry and frugality. Remove this fear from before the eyes of the labouring class; enable them to say, "whether we pay our rent or taxes, and our little debts, or not, all our beds, bedding and clothes, are safe to us," and you take from them one of the most powerful incitements to that industry, care and economy, on which their comfort, their independence, and their respectability must ever depend.

Thus by an ill judged and inconsiderate attempt to save them from some occasional hardship, of rare occurrence, they are exposed to a certain and most extensive evil. We say "of rare occurrence," because we are satisfied from our individual observation and experience, as well as by our general knowledge of the human feelings, now so prevalent, and of the effects produced by a prudent and enlightened regard to their own interests, on the part of landlords and creditors, as well as by their deference to the feelings and opinions of the community at large, that very few cases indeed of the oppression which this bill is intended to prevent, can occur. The power of seizing beds, bedding and apparel for rent, debts and taxes, operates, we have no doubt, as a very salutary check on improper expense in such articles, and a powerful and constant stimulus to provident industry. The removal of this check and stimulus, we believe, would prove far more injurious to the labouring classes, than any instances of harshness or rigour that are likely to occur, in the exercise of the power.

There are other objections also, in our opinion, to the bill in question, but as they are of inferior magnitude, and might perhaps have been removed by amendments, we abstain from enlarging on them. We will merely remark on that part of the bill which relates to taxes and to exertions for collecting them, that no person is assessed whose taxable property does not amount to forty dollars, which at the usual rate of valuation is worth at least one hundred and twenty, on this sum the tax is extremely small in amount, and with moderate care and economy, may very easily be paid, by persons who possess property of such value.

In rejecting this bill we perform a painful duty, which indeed we are frequently called on to perform, the duty of standing between the feelings and wishes of certain classes of the people, and their true interests; and sometimes between the wishes and convenience of individuals, and the interests and happiness of the whole community. From the performance of this duty, which would seem, from the organization of this body, to have been particularly assigned to it by the constitution, we shall never shrink, even in cases, if such should arise, where there may be reason to believe, that a measure is proposed to us in the expectation that it will be rejected. We are far from supposing such to be the case in the present instance. On the contrary we highly appreciate the humane feelings which we are bound to believe have dictated the measure under consideration; and we decline concurring in it, because we are satisfied that it cannot obtain its object, but is on the contrary calculated to increase the evil which it proposes to remedy.

At the same time we think it right to declare our willingness to concur in any measure, which can be devised, for preventing the sufferings which may be sometimes brought on poor and helpless families, by the seizure of their bedding, wearing apparel, or implements of cooking or of labour, on execution or distress, if such measure can be so guarded and defined, as to avoid the danger of its doing harm instead of good, to those whom the legislature, and every individual in his sphere, is bound to comfort and protect. With this view we have passed a bill which we hope may attain the object, in an effectual and unexceptionable manner, and in which we respectfully request your concurrence.

There indeed now exists a provision on this subject, which is contained in the fifth section of the act of April 1715, ch. 45, but it is confined to executions, and is far too vague and indefinite. It is also understood to have long since fallen into disuse in many counties. For these reasons we think that it ought to be repealed, and have inserted into our bill a clause for that purpose.

With this measure for the relief of poor and distressed families, as connected another, which in our opinion will contribute still more to the attainment of the object, by checking the vice of drunkenness, from which a great portion of their distress springs. Poor families, consisting of helpless women and children, are more frequently reduced to suffering through the intemperance, and consequent idleness and extravagance of their husbands, and fathers, than by any other cause; and this intemperance is very greatly encouraged, by the facility of drinking on credit. To prevent debts thus contracted from being recovered at law, would in our opinion be one of the best and most effectual means of destroying this facility, and of discouraging the vice to which it leads.

We have therefore inserted a provision to this effect into the bill in question, and hope that it will receive your approbation.

By order,

J. N. WATKINS, Clk.

Which was read.

And the bill for the relief of Isaac Lyon, of Frederick county, endorsed "will not pass."

The house resumed the consideration of the unfinished business of yesterday, and after some time spent in debating the same, the house adjourns until to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.

THURSDAY, January 25, 1821.

The house met. Present the same members as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read.

The bill for the benefit of the trustees of Garrison Forest Academy, and the trustees of the Franklin Academy in Baltimore, was sent to the senate.

Mr. Lecompte reports a bill, entitled, An act to ratify the proceedings of the commissioners appointed by Dorchester county court to make division of the lands and tenements of Doctor Daniel Sullivan, late of the same county, deceased. Mr. Hilleary reports a bill, entitled, An act to repeal the several acts of assembly respecting the herding of cattle in Allegany county. Mr. S. Stevens reports a bill, entitled, further supplement to an act, entitled, An act to incorporate a company to make a turnpike road leading

to Cumberland, for other purposes. Charles Townes Library Company. Mr. Duvall do. The committee som, in the cou. accompanying s. Louisa was by r. to be in charge. to be the heir an. have had the su. voluminous doc. the said Charles Louis Calvert, have leave to wi.

Which was read. Mr. Bowles do. The committee Frederick coun. with the sum of of the company of the petitioner are without the house the follow. Resolved, Th. council his acco. the governor or appear reasonable allowance which

Which was read. Mr. Bowles p. in the christian. Ke. hner.

Mr. Plater pr. for the change of committee on th. Mr. H. Heary. tion of the law r. tee appointed on.

Ordered, Th. The resolution by Mr. Maulsby nays being requ.

AFFIRMATIVE. Kent, Dalrymple. W. Eccleston, I. Maulsby, Norris.

NEGATIVE. — N. Martin, King. Wilson, Parker. Gaither, Hardin.

The question ed appeared as f. AFFIRMATIVE.

Weems, Kent, Polk, W. Eccle. Nicholson, Ma. Bowles.—38.

NEGATIVE. — gerson, N. Mart. Williams, Wils. Hardcastle, Gai.

On motion by Resolved, Th. fifteen hundred.

On motion by Resolved, Th. shore for a sum. protection of th.

The consider. The bill for th. returned to the