

R E P O R T .

The committee to whom was referred the order passed by the House of Delegates January 5th 1842, relative to General Nathan Towson, by leave respectfully to report, that on the 14th of January last, they addressed a joint letter to our two Senators in Congress, of which they submit a copy (to be found in the appendix marked A.) To this letter the committee have received from the Hon. J. L. Kerr, a reply which is marked B, in the appendix. From the Hon. W. D. Merrick, the committee have not received an answer.

Mr. Kerr, it will be seen, arraigns this committee for an assumption of a power not delegated to them by the House; and attempts to draw a wide distinction between the letter of the committee, and the order adopted by the House, alleging, that the letter makes an enquiry which the order does not intend. The order, it seems, enquires into the proceedings of Senators Kerr and Merrick, whereas the letter proposes to enquire into the conduct of the whole Senate. This contrivance will doubtless excite a smile, because, to say the least of it, it exhibits ingenuity of a very lilliputian character. The committee are certainly censurable for not being more precise in their statement of the order, but perhaps they were betrayed into this inadvertency, by their knowledge of the fact, that the action of the Senate upon this matter, was shaped by the absence of the two Senators from Maryland, because if either of them had been present when the vote was taken, the nomination of General Wool could have been laid upon the table.

It appears, too, that the House, through its committee, has proceeded in a most unusual manner, by instituting an enquiry into the proceedings of our two Senators, in an executive session of the United States Senate, which are held secret by a rule of that Senate. Neither the House or the committee were ignorant of the existence of such a rule, nor were they ignorant that the injunction of secrecy in this case, if it were not already removed, might be removed by the application of the two Senators from Maryland, if they felt that circumstances forced upon them the necessity, in justice to themselves, of showing to the world, that they had no desire to shelter themselves behind the high walls of privilege.