

bridge, Mr. West, and Mr. Hall, be a committee to take the said letter and depositions into consideration, and report their opinion thereon.

The petition of Joshua Chilcut and others being read a second time, ORDERED, That Mr. Kent, Mr. Earle, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Chafe, and Mr. Winder, be a committee to enquire into the facts, and report the same, together with their opinion thereon, to the house.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock.

P O S T M E R I D I E M.

The house met. Mr. Bowie appeared in the house.

Mr. Tillard, from the committee of both houses appointed to examine into the state of the public accounts, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker a report, which was read in the words following:

THE committee of both houses, appointed to examine, during the recess of assembly, the state and condition of the loan-office, and the expenditure of public money, report as followeth:

That, in obedience to the order of the honourable senate and house of delegates, your committee have examined the loan-office, and have made report of the state and condition thereof, to which they beg leave to refer.

Your committee have also in part examined the accounts contained in the books of the board of auditors, and find many of them improperly entered, some accounts altogether omitted, and one account of considerable consequence entered even without being proved, or passed by the auditors; upon the whole, they are of opinion, that the accounts in that department are very far from being kept in that clear, regular, and distinct manner, which business of that importance necessarily requires. The books of accounts of the commissary of stores have been delivered to your committee, but not till the sixth instant, so late, that it was impracticable to inspect them with accuracy; but your committee think themselves obliged, in discharge of that confidence in them reposed, to remark, that these accounts, so far as they have been able to examine, appear to be in a perplexed and confused state; and, although the books of the board of auditors and those of the commissary of stores are connected with each other, yet your committee find but few accounts from the latter entered in the books of the former.

Your committee apprehend, from the manner in which the books have been kept, that much time, patience, and a masterly skill in accounts, will be requisite to go through them and separate the truth from a multitude of errors and obscure entries.

Your committee have also drawn off a list of balances that now appear on the auditors books, and herewith lay the same before the two houses for their consideration; and, although your committee are of opinion, that some of the manufacturers and others may not be credited for the linens and other things they have delivered in, or for services done, yet your committee are well satisfied, there are many and some large balances outstanding, for which no accounts whatever have been rendered.

Your committee further report, that, in order to settle the continental balance, they have wrote to the delegates of this state in congress, for an account of the several sums of money advanced by congress on the credit of the state of Maryland, and have received an answer thereto, by letter, from Mr. Forbes, one of the delegates, specifying the sum, as also the time when, and the persons to whom, monies were advanced, the whole amounting to the sum of 403,766⁶/₉ dollars, for the particulars whereof your committee beg leave to refer to said letter and account therewith transmitted.

Your committee think themselves called upon, by the duty they owe to the state, to observe, that, in their opinion, the public accounts will not be properly audited, nor the books well kept, without allowing a handsome salary to an auditor general, or to a board of auditors, with a power of employing one or more clerks, as occasion may require.

All which is submitted to the consideration of the honourable senate and house of delegates.

Signed per order,

JOHN CALLAHAN, cl. com.

Mr. M'Pherson has leave of absence.

The order of the day, for taking into consideration the appointment of an auditor, or board of auditors, was referred till to-morrow.

Adjourned till next day 9 o'clock.

S A T U R D A Y, March 28, 1778.

THE house met. Present the same members as on yesterday, except Mr. Gresham and Mr. M'Pherson. The proceedings of yesterday were read. Mr. Chew has leave of absence till Monday next.