

Murray, Mr. Richard Barnes, Mr. Sprigg, Mr. John Barnes, and Mr. Gibson, be a committee to take the said petitions, and all others of the like nature, that may be presented to the house, into consideration, and enquire into the facts therein contained, and report the same, together with their opinion thereon, to the house.

ORDERED, That the Rev. Mr. Hanna be requested to perform divine service here every morning, at a quarter before nine o'clock.

Adjourned till next day 9 o'clock.

W E D N E S D A Y, June 10, 1778.

THE house met. Present the same members as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read. Mr. Alexander appeared in the house.

A certificate of the qualification of Mr. Harwood and Mr. M'Pherson was produced and filed.

On [motion, leave given to bring in a bill to aid the proceedings of the commissioners of the tax, and for other purposes. ORDERED, That Mr. Henry, Mr. Chase, Mr. Lloyd, Mr. Murray, and Mr. Lethbury, do prepare and bring in the same.

Leave given to bring in a bill to relieve sundry of the inhabitants of this state from the unequal charge of procuring troops for the American army, and for other purposes. ORDERED, That Mr. West, Mr. Henry, Mr. Sprigg, Mr. Lethbury, and Mr. M'Pherson, do prepare and bring in the same.

Mr. Forbes, from the committee appointed to take into consideration the several letters and acts of congress, &c. brought in a report, which was read in the following words:

By the COMMITTEE appointed to take into consideration the several letters and acts of congress, and to report specially thereon.

WITH respect to the act of congress of the 23d of April, 1778, recommending to the legislatures of the several states to pass laws, or to the executive authority of each state, if invested with sufficient power, to issue proclamations, offering pardon, with such exceptions, and under such limitations and restrictions as they shall think expedient, to such of their inhabitants or subjects as have levied war against any of these states, or adhered to, aided, or abetted the enemy, your committee beg leave to represent to the honourable house, that, by the constitution and form of government, the governor of this state is invested with full power and authority to grant reprieves or pardons for any crime committed against this state; and your committee, well convinced that the governor will exercise his power in such manner as to secure and provide for the general safety, think the interposition of the legislature unnecessary.

Your committee are also of opinion, That it is inexpedient to adopt the act of congress of the 1st of May, 1778, recommending to the several states to empower the executive authority of such states, from time to time, to grant exemptions from duty in the militia to such persons as may be employed in manufacturing military stores, and other articles, for the use of the United States; because, by the late exertions of this government to complete its quota of troops in the army of the United States, and the numerous exemptions from military duty already created, the militia of this state, the proper and natural defence thereof, is greatly weakened. That the act of congress, of the 22d of May, 1778, recommending to the legislatures of the several states to enact laws exempting deserters from the British army and navy, during the present war, from militia duty, and disqualifying such deserters from acting as substitutes in the militia, should be complied with, and that a law for that purpose should be enacted.

Your committee beg leave to observe, That among the several papers referred to their consideration is one of a most extraordinary and dangerous tendency; signed, Henry Lee, M. P. L. D. and directed to capt. William Lindsay, partisan corps light dragoons; and conceived in the following terms:

S. I. R.

By virtue of powers and authority to me committed by the honourable the board of war, I do hereby authorise, direct, and empower you to seize, for the public service, such geldings belonging to the inhabitants of the peninsula formed by the Delaware and Chesapeake bays, as you may judge suitable for the dragoon service. In the execution of this power, you are enjoined to discriminate between the well affected and disaffected. You are to pay particular attention to the speculators in the horse trade, whose pernicious traffic has so much enhanced the price of horses. You will always tender a generous price to the proprietors of the horse prior to seizure; should it not satisfy, you will pay the appraisement of the horse as valued by two men on oath, the one chosen by yourself, the other by the owner of the horse: Should the proprietor refuse receiving the appraised value of his horse, you will make him a tender of the sum before evidences; and bring off the horse, granting him a certificate, purporting what you had done. In the exercise of this power you will regulate your conduct by discretion, and act with moderation.

Your most obedient humble servant,

HENRY LEE, M. P. L. D.

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