

Mr. Chase brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following message :

By the HOUSE of DELEGATES, December 25, 1778.

May it please your honours,
 THE message sent by this house, respecting the augmentation of the diurnal allowance of the members of the general assembly, was esteemed decent, respectful, and pertinent to the subject, and our solicitude that all controversies about any point of difference between the two houses should be conducted in a manner becoming the dignity of the legislature, induced us to couch our message in terms unexceptionable, and free from the imputation of petulance and scurrility; if your honours had been equally solicitous with us to preserve the dignity of the two houses, and to avoid unbecoming sarcasms and irritating sneers, the session would not have been prolonged beyond that period in which the public business might have been transacted. Your honours say, you cannot conceive that the rejection of the resolve for allowing the members forty shillings per day, will be attended with the consequences suggested in our message. Do your honours think it just and right that the members should be allowed an equivalent for their reasonable expences? Do your honours think a gentleman can live in the city of Annapolis for less than the proposed sum? Did not your honours heretofore encrease the allowance, because you thought it insufficient for defraying the actual expences of the members? Why then reject a resolve founded on a similar principle? We were apprized of that part of the constitution which disqualifies persons not possessed of five hundred pounds worth of property from exercising the power of legislation, and our unwillingness to add to the disqualifications, directly or indirectly, prompted us to propose such an encrease of the allowance, as would enable the members to attend to, and transact the public business, without diminishing or impairing their private fortunes, by which they might be rendered incapable of serving the people in future as legislators. Suppose a member of this or any future assembly possessed of five hundred pounds worth of property, is it right, or would it be desired by the people, that he should reduce his estate to four hundred by serving the public? We are well convinced that none but those persons who are for restricting the important power of legislation to themselves, and men like themselves, would desire he should. Your honours have rejected a resolve so reasonable at this time, the supposition is fair that you will not give your assent to a similar one in future. It is the sincere wish of this house, that there may be always a sufficient number of upright, capable, and independent persons, in both houses, to resist the encroachments of wealth, arrogance, and overweening pride. Your honours seem to be very apprehensive, that our constituents will ascribe our conduct in augmenting the allowances of the several civil officers, to the selfish view of affording a colourable pretext for encreasing our own; we fear no such insinuations from our constituents, they entertain a better opinion of those persons in whom they have reposed the greatest confidence, than to insinuate they were actuated by such a base motive in disposing of the public money. This sentiment can exist no where but in the breasts of those who are capable of suggesting it. The privileges and exemptions of the several members will not enable them to live in Annapolis for twenty-five shillings per day, and cannot, by rational thinking men, be deemed adequate to the sums of money necessarily disbursed by them, over and beyond the present allowance. We do not ask for any assistance for any indigent individual; we proposed a resolve that we think right, and for the interest of the people. We esteem it incompatible with the general safety, that men of exalted abilities and superior virtue, qualified by the constitution to act in a legislative capacity, should be removed from the confidence of the people, because your honours are averse to make a proper and reasonable allowance.

Which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

On reading a second time the said message, the question was put, That the words "may it please your honours," be struck out, and the word "gentlemen," be inserted in stead thereof? Carried in the negative.

N E G A T I V E.

Messrs. Sewell, Thomas, Wilmer, Worthington, Hall,	Harrison, Dent, Digges, Jackson, Deye,	Stevenson, Hammond, Vezzey, Ward,	Job, Evans, Brice, Goldborough,	Brown, Berdley, Mason, Stainton,	Sprigg, Hughes, Crabb, Burgess.
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A F F I R M A T I V E.

Messrs. Mackall, H. Ridgely, Maddux,	Polk, Strawbridge, Bowie,	Magruder, Quyan, Gibson,	Bruff, Bond, Norris,	Keene, Potter,	Chase, Bayly.
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On reading the said message throughout, the question was put, That the house agree thereto? Resolved in the affirmative.

A F F I R M A -