

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

The house met.

On the second reading the bill for the adjournment of civil causes ruled for trial, &c. the question was put, That the said bill do pass? The yeas and nays being called for by Mr. Oneale appeared as follow :

## A F F I R M A T I V E.

Messrs	Key, Stone, Jackson,	Kirkman, Brevard,	Miller, Rowland,	Courfey, Chafe,	Morris, Taylor,	Keene, M·Mechen.
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## N E G A T I V E.

Messieurs	Bond, B. Worthington, N. Worthington, Brogden, Fitzhugh,	Chew, Reynolds, Weems, Wilkinson, Ridgely,	Hindman, Roberts, Gibson, Shaw, Job,	Duckett, Magruder, Kent, Quynn, Dennis,	Holland, Shriver, Ogle, Duvall, Norris,	Stull, Burgefs, Griffith, Oneale, Edwards.
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So it was determined in the negative.

Sent to the senate by Mr. Oneale and Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Stone, from the committee, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following report :

THE committee appointed to consider and report on the petition of George Dent, of Charles county, have examined into the facts in support thereof, and find they are truly stated as to the destruction of his property by the enemy. A large elegant dwelling house and out houses thereto annexed, a large quantity of provisions, furniture, and utensils belonging to him, were burnt and totally destroyed, whereby he has suffered great inconveniences, and a very heavy loss. Your committee therefore think he ought to be relieved. Your committee beg leave to suggest the propriety of suspending his taxes on property to double the amount of the value of the property destroyed for the present year. Your committee consider it their duty to explain to the honourable house the reasons upon which they grounded their opinion. The acting principles of every social compact rests upon the foundation of mutual protection and defence. This is the implied agreement in every free state. In our republic the idea is expressed, and forms the basis of government; for in the declaration of rights, in the first section, we find the following expressions: That government of right originates from the people, is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole. Our constitution and form of government has the same object in view; and our laws have, and ever ought to carry the principle into execution, having respect to the original social contract, and the rights of citizens, bearing equal burthens to reciprocal advantages. Acting by this honest rule of conduct, America has attained her wishes; to this glorious event we all contributed, and the person whose property is destroyed assisted to protect and give freedom to him who has remained in safety; fortune has placed a citizen in such a situation, that the government has not protected him; the very condition upon which he paid taxes and assisted the state has not been complied with, because he has borne burthens without receiving an equivalent in return. Your committee apprehend, that one of the main reasons for the confiscation of British property was, to reimburse those who suffered by the wanton depredations of the enemy; and in that law there is held out an engagement to repair the losses of such sufferers; this inference we draw, by adverting to the words of the act itself. The people of Maryland have suffered but little from the immediate calamities of war, and therefore the loss of a citizen who has particularly suffered may the more easily be repaired; humanity calls upon the legislature to relieve them. If those who have not been despoiled of their valuable property, and the means of turning it to the best advantage, find the taxes burthenfome and difficult to pay, what will men feel, whose houses, furniture, necessary utensils, the means of sustenance, are at once involved in ruin, and become an heap of rubbish? Turned out of doors, and deprived at one stroke of every comfort of life, and while they see their country at large elated with the happiness of the times, they will compare their own misfortunes with the prosperity of others. Your committee believe they will complain loudly and justly, and this will have an injurious consequence; for if ever America should have the misfortune of another war, those who are immediately exposed to the power of the enemy, will with difficulty be brought to enter heartily into a controversy, which will prove their certain ruin; if the public does not protect the subject, or compensate his losses, each man will take care of himself, instead of his bending his efforts for the common safety. Your committee, upon the whole, think that justice, humanity, the leading principles of our government, and sound policy, declare in favour of granting Mr. Dent such relief and reimbursement, as may be consistent with his sufferings and the circumstances of the state. All which is submitted to the honourable house.

By order,

A. GOLDRER, clk.

Which was read.

Mr. Stone has leave of absence for three days.

The house adjourns till to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.

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