

THE committee, to whom was referred the petition of Thomas Donnock, of Dorchester county, and Sarah Ferguson, widow of Phillips Ferguson, late of Charles county, deceased, beg leave to report, that they have considered the same, and find, that the said Phillips Ferguson, on the 30th day of September 1780, executed an instrument of writing obligatory to the petitioner Thomas Donnock, his heirs and assigns, with a condition to make over, with a proper deed of bargain and sale, all the land lying on an island called Ferguson's Island, but to whom it does not appear. They further report, that there is on the said instrument of writing, a receipt for £. 175 0 0 specie, paid in full by the petitioner Donnock to Phillips Ferguson, in the year 1780, for the said land; and that some of the facts set forth in the petition have no vouchers. The committee are therefore of opinion, that the petition ought not to be granted. All which is submitted to the honourable house.

By order,

A. GOLDER, clk.

Which was read the first and second time and concurred with.

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

THE committee, to whom was referred the petition of James Poole, of Dorchester county, and Sarah Ferguson, of Charles county, beg leave to report, that they have taken the same into their consideration, and find that the facts set forth in the said petition, so far as they relate to the sale of the lands therein mentioned, are true, as appears by the bonds passed by John Baptist Hicks and Phillips Ferguson, to Anne Brannock, for the conveyance of said lands; and that on the said bonds are assignments from a certain Andrew Davidson and Anne his wife, formerly Anne Brannock, to the petitioner James Poole, and his heirs, which are defective; and that there is no proof of several of the facts set forth in the petition. Under these circumstances, the committee are of opinion the petition ought not to be granted. All which is submitted to the honourable house.

By order,

A. GOLDER, clk.

Which was read the first and second time and concurred with.

On motion, ORDERED, That Mr. Ramsay be added to the committee on the petitions of Isaac Redgrave and John Wallis, and Isaac Redgrave and Benjamin Hatcheson.

Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, Esq; from the senate, delivers to Mr. Speaker a petition from John Rolph and Benjamin Hatcheson, securities of Thomas Boyer, late collector of Kent county, deceased, praying an act may pass, empowering them to collect the balances due to the said Thomas Boyer, deceased, endorsed; "By the senate, November 24, 1785: Read and referred to the consideration of the house of delegates.

"By order,

J. DORSEY, clk."

And the following message:

BY THE SENATE, NOVEMBER 24, 1785.

GENTLEMEN,

WE think it a duty incumbent on us to call your attention to the state of our judiciary department. The thirtieth article of our bill of rights, for very obvious and important reasons, enjoins that the chancellor and judges should be independent, not only by holding their commissions during good behaviour, but also by having proper salaries secured to them during the continuance of their commissions. It is the duty of the legislature both to fix the salaries of the chancellor and judges, and to provide funds by a permanent law for the regular payment of such salaries. This duty has not been complied with, and instead of being in that state of independency required by the bill of rights, and strongly dictated by the first principles of free governments, the chancellor and judges have hitherto remained dependent for their salaries upon the annual votes of the legislature. This house hath been of opinion for a considerable time past, that there was no circumstance which would justify the legislature in delaying to make the provision required by the constitution, and our opinion hath been ineffectually communicated to a former house of delegates; but we trust, gentlemen, you will concur with us in sentiment, that this very important subject ought to be properly attended to early in this session, and that you will in due time send us a bill for fixing the salaries of the chancellor and judges during the continuance of their commissions, and for the payment of those salaries with certainty and regularity. The experience of passed sessions induces us to apprehend we may find ourselves under the necessity of determining too hastily, matters, by which the welfare of this state in particular, and of the United States in general, may be essentially affected, and which consequently demand the maturest consideration.

Towards the close of each session, when from its length and the approaching severity of the season the house of delegates have been usually anxious to rise, the most important part of the public business hath been transmitted to the senate. As the constitution does not allow this house to propose amendments to money bills, the evil consequence must readily occur, if we should think it necessary to dissent to them at a time when the house of delegates will not agree to continue sitting to re-assume the discussion of the subject matter of such bills, or even to enter into a consideration of such amendments as the senate may propose to others. We therefore request, that such important bills as are intended to be offered for our consideration by your house, may be sent to us so early in the session, that a fair opportunity may be given to us of considering them with that deliberation which every interesting act of legislature requires.

By order,

J. DORSEY, clk.

Which were read.