

ORDERED, That the same be taken into consideration on the second Tuesday of the next session of assembly.

The letters from Francis Deakins, were read. ORDERED, That Mr. T. Johnson, Mr. Chase, Mr. Shaw, Mr. Gough, Mr. B. Worthington, Mr. Joshua Seney, Mr. Oneale, Mr. Bruce and Mr. Brown, be a committee to consider and report thereon.

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

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of Thomas Dorsey, of Anne-Arundel county, beg leave to report, that they have attentively considered the allegations of the said petitioner, and find, that he, with others, his partners, being indebted for bar-iron bought at from ninety to one hundred pounds per tun, of certain purchasers of confiscated property, passed bonds to the state on the twenty-second day of February, seventeen hundred and eighty-two, for the sum of eight thousand one hundred and forty pounds in continental state and state money; that the petitioner's situation in this case hath become truly distressing, not only by reason of the very high price contracted to be paid for the above iron, but also by reason of the unfortunate circumstances of the other obligors, who in all probability will be unable to assist him in discharging any considerable part of the aforesaid bonds; that the petitioner hath, by sale of his property at a price greatly under its real value, and by loan from his friends, obtained and paid into the treasury final settlements to the amount of eight thousand one hundred and fifty-six pounds five shillings, in lieu of three thousand five hundred and twenty-five pounds, being one third of the sum then due on the aforesaid bonds, agreeably to a resolution of the last session; that although by an uncommon exertion the petitioner hath solely paid the whole of said last mentioned sum, for property enjoyed, not only by himself, but also by others, it appears to your committee, that even this sum, under the terms of the said resolution, must be forfeited by his inability to comply with a second payment, should not the legislature humanely interpose; that the said petitioner, much involved by private debts, and having a numerous family, hath, by his conduct, evidenced the strongest disposition to do every act of justice towards his creditors which could be consistent with his duty towards them.

Your committee have reason to believe, that the petitioner would, by a continuance of a conduct similar to that which he hath exhibited, effect the laudable objects of his aim, if aided by the lenity of the general assembly, but if otherwise, that his and a respectable family's ruin are inevitable. Your committee beg leave to observe, that although in general cases of this kind they feel no inclination to indulge, yet, that on a serious review of, and reflection upon, the whole circumstances attending the present peculiar case, they think the petitioner's application merits the most benign attention, and that his prayer ought to be granted. Your committee conceive, that justice requires a law to be passed, placing the petitioner, or any other of the obligors aforesaid making payments on the aforesaid bonds, in the like situation of the state as to means of compelling payment of the sums respectively due from every obligor.

All which is submitted to the honourable house.

A. GOLDBER, clk.

By order,

Which was read.

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

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of sundry inhabitants of Baltimore-town, praying relief from leases for ground-rent, because the annual rents received are, in general, extravagantly excessive, and in many instances exceed double the value of the property in fee-simple, and representing that hundreds of valuable mechanics, and others, with their families, will be utterly ruined without some redress from the legislature, beg leave to report, that they have considered the said petition, and believe the facts stated therein to be true.

Your committee beg leave to report their opinion, that great regard ought to be paid to private contracts, and that the legislature ought not to interfere, unless in cases of great necessity, arising from manifest grievance and oppression to numbers of people, and where no redress can be obtained but from the supreme authority of government. Your committee are of opinion, that the calamity and grievance, under which the petitioners labour, is very oppressive and extensive, and must inevitably ruin numbers of them, with their families. Your committee are of opinion, that no general rule of relief can be established, and therefore that each case ought to be stated, and that the persons interested ought to have notice of the application to the general assembly.

Your committee on the whole, beg leave to recommend the following resolutions to the honourable house:

RESOLVED, That the said petition be referred to the consideration of the next session of assembly, and that notice of the said petition be given to the persons interested, by personal notice, or by advertisements in the public papers, and that council be heard on the subject matter of the said petition, at the bar of the house, if desired.

RESOLVED, That it be earnestly recommended to the landlords and tenants interested in the said petition to compromise, by agreement or arbitration, the rents reserved, on reasonable and just terms.

All which is submitted to the honourable house.

A. GOLDBER, clk.

By order,

Which was read.

A petition from Charles Mankin, of Charles county, collector of the public tax for the year 1785, praying a law may pass allowing him the same speedy remedy against his deputies that the state has against him, was preferred and read.