

74 VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS, NOVEMBER SESSION, 1800.

October, 1800. An act to encourage the destruction of crows in Kent county, passed November session, 1797, chapter 16, expired the 1st day of November, 1800. An act to encourage the destruction of wolves and crows in the several counties therein mentioned, passed November session, 1797, chapter 22, expired the 20th day of October, 1800. An act relating to the records in the register of wills and clerks offices in Queen-Anne's county, passed November session, 1797, will expire the 15th day of April next.

All which is submitted to the house.

By order,

R. K. WATTS, clk.

Which was read.

The bill to regulate constables fees in the several counties therein mentioned, was read the second time, passed, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

The bill for the relief of John Jarvis, was read the second time, passed, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

The bill to appoint an agent for the year one thousand eight hundred and one, was read the second time, passed, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

The amendments to the bill to levy on the assessable property of Anne-Arundel county a sum of money for the purpose herein after mentioned, were read the second time and rejected.

The amendments to the bill to alter such parts of the constitution and form of government as relate to voters and the qualifications of voters, were read the second time and rejected.

The following message being prepared, was read and agreed to.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DECEMBER 13, 1800.

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

WE disagree to the amendments proposed to the act to alter such parts of the constitution and form of government as relate to voters and the qualifications of voters, and particularly that to be inserted from the word "age" in the sixth line of the first page to the word "shall" in the eighth line of the same page, to wit: Having resided within this state two years, and in the county in which he offers to vote three months, next preceding the election, and having, within twelve months next preceding the election, been charged with a state or county tax in the assessment or tax book of such county, or, in case of removal from one county to another, having the time aforesaid been charged with such tax in the assessment or tax book of the county of his last residence.

If we agree to your amendment, which makes it an indispensable qualification that the voter shall be charged with a state or county tax, or on the tax book of the county, the following consequence will ensue, many men, who are now under the constitution entitled to the right of suffrage, will then be excluded, because, many individuals possess the sum of thirty pounds who are not, nor cannot, agreeable to law, be assessed at all; then so far from extending the privilege of voting, it will tend to curtail it, and the object of the bill destroyed.

When we consider ourselves the guardians of the rights and privileges of the people of this state, we cannot agree that the right of suffrage, a right inestimable to free men, should be dependent on any partial assessment law which any future legislature may think proper to adopt, which we conceive must be the case should we agree to the above amendments.

We find that the framers of our constitution have wisely inserted the qualifications of voters in the constitution of this state, and in consequence of it, the qualification in some measure becomes permanent, and cannot be altered without the cool, deliberate and determinate concurrence of two succeeding legislatures; but if the qualifications be ascertained by an assessment bill, which may be altered without those formalities necessary to alter the constitution, the inestimable privilege of suffrage becomes then dependent on the sudden caprice and passion of future legislatures.

Under those reflections, gentlemen, we have taken the liberty to address you, hoping, that on reconsideration you will be sensible of the propriety of the above observations, and will recede from the amendments.

By order,

W. HARWOOD, clk.

Mr. Chambers, from the committee, delivers to the speaker the following report:

THE committee to whom was referred the memorial of captain Joseph Ford, of Saint-Mary's county, beg leave to report, that they have taken the same into consideration, and are of opinion that the prayer thereof is reasonable, and ought to be granted; they therefore recommend the following resolution:

RESOLVED; That the auditor-general, under the direction of the governor and council, be and he is hereby directed to examine the musters of the Maryland line, and other documents that may be produced, and liquidate the depreciation on the pay of, and grant a certificate to, captain Joseph Ford, and all other officers similarly circumstanced, of the Maryland line, or to their legal representatives, for that sum which may appear to be justly due to them, agreeably to the regulations heretofore established.

By order,

J. S. BETTON, clk.

Which was read.

Mr. Nelson, from the committee, delivers to the speaker the following report:

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of Frederick Middagh, of Frederick county, beg leave to report, that they have considered the same, and though they are willing to express their disapprobation of the practice