

The bill, entitled, A supplement to an act, entitled, An act to incorporate companies to make several turnpike roads through Baltimore county, and for other purposes, the bill, entitled, An act to prevent persons from obstructing the passage of fish up Patapsco river; the bill, entitled, An act to continue an act, entitled, An act to incorporate the Maryland insurance company, passed at November session, seventeen hundred and ninety-five, the bill, entitled, An act to authorise a lottery or lotteries to raise a sum of money for the improvement of the navigation of the river Susquehanna, and the resolution in favour of Rinaldo Johnson and Elisha Berry, of Prince-George's county, were sent to the senate by the clerk.

The report on the petition of Benjamin Fickle was read the second time, the resolution therein contained assented to, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

Petitions from William Beatty, Isaac Smith, Benjamin Rhodes and Joel M. Munson, of Baltimore county, and Singleton Warfield, of Anne-Arundel county, praying acts of insolvency, were preferred, read, and referred to the committee appointed on petitions of a similar nature.

The report on the petition of Christopher Johnson was read the second time, the resolution therein contained assented to, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

The bill, entitled, A supplement to an act, entitled, An act for the regulation of officers fees, was sent to the senate by the clerk.

On the second reading of the report of the committee to whom were referred the communications of the governor of Massachusetts, enclosing resolutions proposing an amendment to the constitution of the United States, which was made the twelfth day of January, a motion was made to amend the same; it was objected to as not being in order, and on the question, Is it in order to amend said report? it was resolved by the house in the affirmative. The said report was accordingly amended to read as followeth:

THE committee to whom were referred the communications of the governor of Massachusetts, enclosing resolutions, purporting to be the "Doings of the legislature of that commonwealth," and proposing an amendment to the constitution of the United States, report, that they have given the same that serious and deliberate consideration which a measure of such magnitude, contemplating such an important innovation upon the principles of the constitution, is entitled to receive, and are of opinion that it would be unwise, dangerous and impolitic, in the state of Maryland, to concur in the adoption of the same. The state of Maryland, from the principle that representation is apportioned among the several states according to numbers, in the manner in the said constitution provided, has its full weight of representation in the councils of the union, and it would be unwise to diminish or to relinquish it; neither ought it to be matter of clamour or complaint with any of the states not enjoying the compound ratio of representation, because the states which participate in the advantages resulting from this principle, are subjected to additional taxation, as taxation is apportioned among the several states according to representation, and there is less cause for this uneasiness, when it cannot be contested that the states which do not partake of this benefit, have other advantages to counterbalance it; besides, the principle of representation as fixed in the constitution, being avowedly the result of a spirit of compromise and mutual concession among the several states at the time of its formation and adoption, and there being other great, important and prominent features ingrafted into the constitution, dependent upon the same conciliating spirit of compromise and mutual concession, it would be dangerous, by adopting the amendment proposed, to shake those great and fundamental articles of the federal compact, and by sanctioning a measure that should be fraught with this destructive and disorganizing tendency, loosen the ties by which the states are now happily confederated, disseminate the seeds of disunion, and finally eventuate in a state of things to which every reflecting mind must look forward with terror and abhorrence. Emphatically has it been offered to the solemn contemplation of the people of America, by the exalted patriot and able statesman, our beloved Washington, that "towards the preservation of their government, and the permanency of their present happy state, it is necessary that they not only discountenance irregular opposition to its acknowledged authority, but also that they resist, with care, the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretexts:" "One method of assault," he proceeds, "may be to affect, in the form of the constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus undermine what cannot be directly overthrown." Thus warned from such exalted authority, it behooves the people of the United States to touch, with awful caution, the principles of the great charter upon which rests so eminently the general welfare; at this crisis, when a fair, full and successful experiment of the wise, energetic and salutary principles and provisions of our constitution has been made, and its wisdom undeniably established; when the administration of this constitution is so ably conducted in its several departments, and tranquillity, safety and happiness, thereby diffused throughout the union, equal rights protected, and the interests of the whole eminently promoted and preserved, it would be highly impolitic to hazard the general harmony, in giving a constitutional sanction to a measure, which, we consider, can be productive of no possible general good, but may tend, in its mischievous effects, to unhinge the leading principles upon which some of the most valuable and salutary provisions of the constitution are founded, and thereby introduce national discord, and a subversion of all government; the proposed amendment, therefore, being, in the opinion of the committee, unwise, unsafe and impolitic, and as they are friends to the confederation, and hostile to any measure which has a tendency to endanger the union, they submit the following resolution:

The question was then put, Will the house assent thereto? The yeas and nays being required, appeared as follow: