

the great augmentation of the number of friends to the government—cemented by the tie of interest—from the uniformity of regulation, which will pervade your revenue system—from a contemplation, also, of the state debts, and the fair claim arising from thence to a general funding principle, I shall give to the resolution my concurrence.

Thus have I disclosed to the committee some of the leading ideas which have influenced my determination. The nature, the novelty, and the importance of the object led me to consider it upon a large and national scale. My sentiments were in this view submitted to the committee. I have launched my barque on the federal ocean, and will endeavour to steer her appointed course—and should she arrive at her destined port, with her invaluable cargo safe and unhurt, I shall not regret that in her voyage through these unexplored depths, she may have lost some small share of her rigging, which may be considered as a cheap purchase for the safety of the whole.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 10.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treasury for making provision for the support of the public credit. The first alternative in the 5th proposition, was read with the amendment proposed by Mr. Boudinot, viz.

To receive a certificate drawing an interest of 6 per cent per annum, payable in 10 years for the other $\frac{2}{3}$ of the debt, which certificate shall be received as specie, in payment for the lands in the western territory.

Mr. Sherman observed, that if the alternative proposed by the Secretary, is adopted, one third part of the debt, principal and interest, will be extinguished; but the amendment contemplates an increase of the debt, for one third at an interest will in the course of 10 years amount to an enormous sum. He adverted to the several alternatives, and supposed that among the number every description of creditors will be satisfied. If the alternative should be adopted, he should move to strike out the 20 cents per acre—to leave the price a blank in order to wait for the report of the Secretary on the subject of the western territory.

Mr. Boudinot repeated his objection to the proposal of bringing such a quantity of lands to market.

Mr. Fitzsimons said he had wished the gentleman would have withdrawn his motion for striking out the western territory. He observed that the alternative proposed by the gentleman would place the creditors in a much worse situation than they would stand upon the plan of the report; the proposition of the Secretary does not involve any compulsion—if the creditors chuse to take the land, they can do it, if not, they may receive their 4 per cent, and wait for the residue till the resources of the country are adequate to paying them. He said that the $\frac{2}{3}$ of the debt placed in the situation the gentleman proposes, will amount to upwards of 40 millions in ten years—certificates issued on this plan will induce a system of speculation beyond all idea that any person can form.

Mr. Boudinot still supported his motion and expatiated on the consequences which would result from the adoption of the alternative.

Mr. Hartley. I wish not to throw unnecessary embarrassments in the way of the original motion to which the amendment under consideration is offered. But some difficulties have suggested themselves to my mind, I could wish they were obviated.

If the truth is as some gentlemen say, who advocate the resolution without the amendment, that the western lands are sufficient to redeem one third of the debt, why not pledge them for the redemption, and place them under the direction of officers appointed by government to sell or dispose of them—and administer the property instead of individuals—and let the money arising therefrom be applied to discharge the public debt?

I fear that the creditor who subscribes to the redeemable fund agreeably to the resolution, immediately puts one third of his debt in jeopardy; or at least he can consider it but of small value.

Few men would act for themselves and take up lands—and few cases would bear the expense of an agency.

From the complexion of the report it appears that a reduction of interest is intended.

For as the redeemable alternative or proposition is rather exceptional for the reasons which have been given, the creditors will be obliged to subscribe to the irredeemable funds, and they will experience a loss of near five per cent. for the supposed compensation will go but a little way.

Possibly government may be charged with duplicity. The original holder, the bona fide purchaser, may perhaps have some reason to complain—six per cent. was promised, but one third is reduced.

I am also apprehensive that other bad consequences may follow the reduction of the interest.

Interest here is at six per cent. and not a sufficient quantity of money to be loaned at that to supply the demand; the people will not wish to hold securities which produce so small an interest as four per cent.

In Europe money can be borrowed at three per cent.

Europeans will examine our funds and purchase our securities at low rates. The revenues of America will be carried to foreign countries. We may in truth become the tributaries of foreign citizens to a great extent; to the great injury of the agriculture, manufactures and commerce of the United States.

Those difficulties have struck me. I think with the gentleman from Jersey, that the western lands should be pledged for the redemption of one third of the debt, and officers should be appointed to dispose of them—and that certificates, such as are mentioned in the amendment, or somewhat similar, should be received in payment.

This might perhaps be offered as a separate alternative—I am for the principle—and as the idea for a separate alternative is not fully seconded, I shall, as at present informed, vote for the amendment—though I shall always hold myself open to conviction.

THURSDAY, MARCH 11.

In committee of the whole on the report of the Secretary of the Treasury, for making provision for the support of the public credit—the following proposition was read, viz.

To have the whole sum funded at an annuity, or yearly interest of four per cent. irredeemable by any payment exceeding five dollars per annum on account both of principal and interest; and to receive as a compensation for the reduction of interest, fifteen dollars and eighty cents, payable in lands, as in the preceding case.

The motion to reject the proposition was discussed.

Mr. Sherman. This proposition is to fund the debt at 4 per cent. and if the evidences of the debt are to go out of the country, I should be in favor of having as much of it funded at that rate as possible. He thought the proposition a favorable one in this view, and he was against striking out.

Mr. Sedgwick. The irredeemable quality of this proposition appears to be the chief objection in the minds of gentlemen—since it appears conceded on all hands, that a strict literal compliance with the precise terms of the original contract at the present moment cannot be made, and a modification of it is the necessary result—it becomes a subject of enquiry how we shall best meet the ideas and acquiescence of the creditors, and conciliate the approbation of our constituents. In this view, holding out different alternatives appears to be a proper measure, and among those alternatives the principle of irredeemability seems to offer itself, as a mean of acquiring the concurrence of a particular class of creditors—others will prefer other modes of funding their demands—hence the advantage, propriety and justice of holding out various propositions; and as he was fully persuaded that the public opinion would concur in every decision which appears to be the result of calm deliberation and a thorough investigation of the State of our country and the circumstances of our constituents, he doubted not that 99 out of 100, of the public creditors would subscribe to the loan; the principle is not strictly irredeemable—it provides for a gradual extinction of the debt, and within a period

which will be as short as any person can contemplate, as within the probable capacity of the country to do it.

Mr. Fitzsimons after premising that the several propositions appeared to depend on each other; said, with respect to irredeemability, he had his doubts.

He did not think that this idea would meet the approbation of the people; on the other hand, they generally conceived that a public debt was a great public disadvantage, and would be for getting rid of the burthen as soon as possible, the habitual mode of reflecting on this subject is opposed to a perpetual debt; I confess I have my difficulties respecting this principle; I could wish that the period could be shortened, so that the eventual extinction should take place as soon as the abilities of the people would admit of it.

Mr. Madison was in favor of reducing the number of the alternatives, a simple, unembarrassed system is to be preferred.

Mr. Seney also objected to the adoption of the several propositions as in the report; it would render the funding system complex, and introduce such a series of calculations, as to convert the whole into an intricate science, which would be above the comprehension of persons in general; and being made an object by particular persons would give them great advantages in speculating in the funds; for these reasons he hoped the proposition would be struck out.

Mr. Sherman observed that if the whole debt was in the hands of the citizens of the United States he should think it unnecessary to introduce the irredeemable principle into the system; but as between 4 and 5 millions are in the hands of foreigners, and it is as necessary that that part should be funded as well as the rest, to induce them to relax at 4 per cent. and to accommodate some part of the plan to their ideas, he thought as this part of the system would not operate to the injury of the United States he was in favor of its adoption. He thought it best that the debt should be kept in the United States as much as possible: he considered it an unfavorable circumstance to have it in the hands of foreigners; but as they were in possession of such a proportion he was for making the best terms that we could.

Mr. Page reprobated different propositions; he was in favor of a simple plain system, commensurate to the apprehension of men of plain, common understandings. He contrasted the different species of paper with different sorts of coin, and shewed there was no similarity.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24.

Sundry petitions were read, and laid on the table.

The Secretary for the Department of War laid before the House sundry reports on memorials and petitions from officers of the late army, which had been referred to him.

Hon. J. B. Althoe, member from the State of North Carolina, appeared, was qualified, and took his seat this day.

The House receded from their amendment to the amendment proposed by the Senate to the Appropriation bill, and concurred with the Senate.

The amendment proposed by the Senate to the bill, providing for the remission of fines, forfeitures, and penalties in certain cases, was read, and taken into consideration.

This amendment provides, that judgment on forfeitures incurred in particular cases above a certain sum, should be ultimately referred to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of State, and the Attorney General of the United States: With a proviso granting full relief in cases of seizure in future not justly founded.

Mr. Smith, (S. C.) stated some objections to this amendment.

Mr. Livermore, was also opposed to it, as changing the principal of the bill altogether, and introducing an entire new act, very different from that passed by the house.

Mr. Sherman observed, that it was true the proposition of the Senate materially altered the bill; still he thought it a real amendment: It will lengthen the process; but it will eventually produce strict justice, and tend more effectually to secure the revenue, and guard against impositions.

Mr. Goodhue objected to the proposition, and observed, that so far from affording any relief, as contemplated in the bill, we should be just as well without any bill at all. He instanced the case of a person who should happen to incur, unintentionally, a penalty in the State of Georgia; he must send to the seat of government to obtain a decision on his case—meantime from the perishable nature of his cargo as may happen, his property at all events is sacrificed—He hoped the amendment would not be acceded to.

Mr. Jackson was opposed to it on similar principles, and observed that he should prefer that the judge of the district court should be empowered to give a final determination; he considered the judge as competent as the officers of State at the seat of government—and in a more responsible situation.

Mr. Smith (S. C.) spoke largely on the subject—and in opposition to the amendment.

Mr. Gerry objected to the proposition as unconstitutional—as the appointing the heads of departments as judges in this case, is to all intents and purposes establishing a board of commissioners with judiciary powers; and is an indirect, and not very delicate attack on the power of the President and the Senate of the United States.

Mr. Sedgwick was opposed to the former part of the amendment, but wished that the latter part might be adopted. He differed from Mr. Gerry by observing that he conceived there was propriety in referring matters of this nature to officers already appointed.

Mr. Sherman proposed a committee of conference.

Mr. Burke was in favor of the motion.

Mr. Lawrence entered into a general consideration of the subject of fines and forfeitures. These he observed were originally designed as guards to the safe and effectual collection of the revenue; and in this view they ought to be as nearly inevitable as is any ways consistent with mercy to individuals, and justice to the public at large. The contemplation of a mitigation of these fines and forfeitures ought to be managed with a great deal of circumspection—that such difficulties may be thrown in the way of getting rid of those forfeitures, as may prevent careless and incautious violations of the law; he added many more observations—and concluded by saying that he could wish the last part of the proposition should be adopted, but with respect to the former, he had not so fully digested the subject as to be able at the present time, to give his opinion—he wished therefore that the bill might lay on the table for a few days.

Mr. Huntington said he had always been opposed to the bill, as absurd and improper—for if a law is necessary in the present case to mitigate fines, &c. incurred for breaches of the revenue law, we shall act inconsistently with ourselves, if we do not pass laws to abate punishments in other cases. He believed no parallel can be produced in any country of laws similar to the one proposed—it is referring matters of judicial determination to a chancellor unknown to the constitution. He wished therefore that the bill might be suffered to lie on the table—never more to be taken up—if a committee of conference is appointed, he had no doubt this would be the issue of the business.

On the question being taken—the amendment of the Senate was disagreed to.

A committee of conference was then appointed, consisting of Mr. Ames, Mr. Huntington and Mr. Jackson.

Mr. Sedgwick moved that a committee be appointed to consider and report what provision shall be made for the support of the officers of the supreme judicial court.

The motion was ordered to be laid on the table.

Mr. Lee moved for leave to bring in a bill further to suspend the operation of part of the collection and tonnage laws—the motion was laid on the table.

On motion of Mr. Lawrence, the engrossed bill making provision for persons employed in the intercourse between the United States and foreign nations was recommitted to a select committee. Adjourned.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25.

Sundry petitions were read.

Mr. Gilman of the committee of enrolment, brought in the bill making appropriations for the support of government for the year 1790, and the bill for establishing a uniform rule of naturalization, enrolled—which had been examined by the committee, and found correct; the speaker then signed the same.

A motion was then made that the house should go into a committee of the whole on the bill respecting the South Western frontiers. Some objection was made to the immediate adoption of the motion—as interesting and important intelligence was daily expected from Governor Sinclair.

The motion being put was carried in the affirmative—and the galleries were thereupon shut.

FRIDAY, MARCH 26.

Mr. Livermore presented a petition from the inhabitants of Portsmouth, (N. H.) respecting certain duties on tonnage; and also praying that the district court may be holden in that place only.

In committee of the whole House.—Mr. Boudinot in the chair. The bill to prevent the exportation of goods, not duly inspected according to the laws of the several States, was taken into consideration.

Mr. Livermore objected to the bill, as an unconstitutional interference on the part of Congress with the powers of the respective States. The Constitution, said he, has expressly reserved to the several States the power of making their own inspection laws, and the power of executing them is inseparably connected: Those laws will doubtless be executed without an interference on our part.

Mr. Smith, (S. C.) observed, that the object of the bill is to make it the duty of the collectors to attend to the execution of the State Inspection Laws, it having formerly been the duty of the State Collectors: Since the appointments were made by the United States, the officers did not conceive themselves bound to pay particular attention to those laws.

Several other gentlemen spoke on the subject, and the great importance of such laws, and their punctual execution were enlarged on.

The Committee finally agreed to some amendments, which were adopted by the House; and the bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading on Monday next.

In committee of the whole on the bill for accepting the cession made by the State of North Carolina of certain lands therein described.

In the preamble to the bill, the words "THE HONORABLE," were prefixed to the names of the Senators from North Carolina.

Mr. Page moved that those words should be struck out. He observed that however honorable the gentlemen might be, and he was ready to acknowledge they were truly so; yet agreeable to the usage of the House, he conceived there was an impropriety in giving any titles. He hoped never to see the time when a legislative sanction should be given to such distinctions. If a permanent aristocracy was ever established among us, it would thro this medium: Such titles have been productive of infinite mischief in other countries: They are anti-republican, and as such cannot be conferred with any propriety by this House.

Mr. Sedgwick observed, that if the Hon. gentleman was ready to acknowledge the Senators from the State of North Carolina were truly honorable characters, he could see no mischief or impropriety in saying so; it comports with the usage of the several States: but, he considered it as a matter of trifling consequence, and hoped the committee would not spend time in altercation the subject.

Mr. Page made some reply to Mr. Sedgwick, and the vote being taken, it passed in the affirmative by a great majority, and the words were struck out.

A condition in the act of cession, relative to the emancipation of slaves—that Congress should not (as in the act for the government of the western territory) provide for their freedom—occasioned some debate; an amendment was proposed and debated—but not adopted.

The committee reported the bill with the above amendment only—which was agreed to by the House.

Mr. Gilman of the committee of enrolment, informed the House—that the appropriation and naturalization bills were presented to the President of the United States for his approbation, the 25th instant. Adjourned to Monday.

The committee of the whole house, to whom was referred the report of the committee on the memorial of the people called Quakers, and of the Pennsylvania and New-York societies for promoting the abolition of slavery, agreed to the following—which was entered on the journals:

That the migration or importation of such persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, cannot be prohibited by Congress prior to the year 1808.

That Congress have no authority to interfere in the emancipation of slaves or in the treatment of them within any of the States, it remaining with the several States alone, to provide any regulation therein, which humanity and true policy may require.

That Congress have authority to refrain the citizens of the United States from carrying on the African trade for the purpose of supplying foreigners with slaves, and of providing by proper regulations for their humane treatment, during the passage of slaves imported by the citizens, into the said States admitting such importation.

ANNAPOLIS, March 18.

The following is the Address of the General-Assembly of Maryland to the President of the United States.

WE, the general assembly of Maryland, avail ourselves of the first occasion afforded us, since your election to the office of President of the United States, of expressing to you our gratitude for accepting that truly honorable, yet arduous station; and of mingling our congratulations with those of our country on this auspicious event.

With pleasure we anticipate the blessings which these states will derive from the firmness and wisdom of your administration. The past proofs of your respect for the rights of your fellow-citizens, amidst the din of arms and rage of war, are a sure pledge that these rights will be equally respected and cherished by you in peace.

In this place, from which we now address you, our predecessors lately saw the affecting scene of their patriot chief resigning his military command, having fully accomplished its glorious ends.

The lapse of a few years having proved the inadequacy of the late confederacy to the attainment of its objects, it affords subject of the most pleasing reflection, that in the change which became necessary to the safety and welfare of the people of America, the President of the United States should be the same person to whom they were indebted for a long series of the most important, glorious and disinterested services.

This people have unanimously called upon you to preside over their common councils, under a