

thereof duly convicted, shall forfeit and pay, for every such offence, the sum of one hundred dollars.

And be it further enacted, That every printer of newspapers may send one paper to each and every other printer of newspapers within the United States, free of postage, under such regulations as the Postmaster-General shall provide.

And be it further enacted, That all newspapers conveyed in the mail, shall be under a cover open at one end, carried in separate bags from the letters, and charged with the payment of one cent for any distance not more than one hundred miles, and one cent and a half for any greater distance: And it shall be the duty of the post-master-general and his deputy, to keep a separate account of the newspapers, and the deputy post-masters shall receive fifty per cent. on the postage of all newspapers: And if any other matter or thing be enclosed in such papers, the whole packet shall be charged, agreeably to the rates established by this act, for letters or packets. And if any of the persons employed in any department of the post-office, shall unlawfully detain, delay, embezzle or destroy any newspaper, with which he shall be entrusted, such offenders, for every such offence, shall forfeit a sum not exceeding fifty dollars: Provided, that the post-master-general, in any contract, he may enter into, for the conveyance of the mail, may authorize the person, with whom such contract is made, to carry newspapers, other than those conveyed in the mail.

And be it further enacted, That the post-master-general be, and he is hereby authorized to allow to the deputy post-masters, respectively, such commission on the monies arising from the postage of letters and packets, as he shall think adequate to their respective services: Provided, That the said commission shall not exceed forty per cent to any deputy, whose compensation thereby shall not exceed fifty dollars, nor thirty per cent to any deputy, whose compensation thereby shall not exceed one hundred dollars, nor twenty per cent to any other deputy, except the post-master at the port where the European packets do, or shall steadily arrive; to whom such farther allowance, in addition to the emoluments of his office, shall be made, as the post-master-general shall deem a reasonable compensation for his extra-services, in the receipt and dispatch of letters, originally received into his office, from on board such packets, and by him forwarded to other offices: And provided also, That the compensations aforesaid shall not exceed eighteen hundred dollars per annum to any one post-master for all services by him rendered.

And be it further enacted, That if any deputy post-master, or other person authorized to receive the postage of letters and packets, shall neglect or refuse to render his accounts, and pay over to the post-master-general, the balance by him due, at the end of every three months, it shall be the duty of the post-master-general, to cause a suit to be commenced against the person or persons so neglecting or refusing: And if the post-master-general shall not cause such suit to be commenced within three months, from the end of every such three months, the balances due from every such delinquent shall be charged to, and recoverable from the post-master-general.

And be it further enacted, That all pecuniary penalties and forfeitures, incurred under this act, shall be, one half for the use of the person or persons informing and prosecuting for the same, the other half to the use of the United States.

And be it further enacted, That it shall be lawful for the post-master-general, to make provision, where it may be necessary, for the receipt of all letters and packets intended to be conveyed by any ship or vessel, beyond sea, or from any port of the United States to another port therein; and the letters so received shall be formed into a mail, sealed up, and directed to the post-master of the port to which such ship or vessel shall be bound. And for every letter or packet so received, there shall be paid, at the time of its reception, a postage of one cent. And the post-master-general may make arrangements with the post-masters in any foreign country for the reciprocal receipt and delivery of letters and packets, through the post-offices.

And be it further enacted, That the deputy post-masters, and the persons employed in the transportation of the mail, shall be exempt from militia duties, or any fine or penalty for neglect thereof.

And be it further enacted, That all the surplus revenue of the general post-office, which shall have accrued previous to the first day of June next, not heretofore appropriated, be, and the same is hereby appropriated towards defraying any deficiency which may arise in the revenue of the said department for the year next ensuing.

And be it further enacted, That the act passed at the last session of Congress, intituled, "An act to continue in force, for a limited time, an act intituled, "An act for the temporary esta-

blishment of the post-office," be, and the same is hereby continued in full force, until the first day of June next, and no longer.

And be it further enacted, That this act shall be in force for the term of two years, from the said first day of June next, and no longer.

JONATHAN TRUMBULL, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

JOHN ADAMS, Vice-President of the United States, and President of the Senate.

APPROVED, FEBRUARY TWENTIETH, 1792.

GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States.



CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6.

In committee of the whole, on the Fishery Bill.

[CONTINUED.]

MR. GOODHUE.—The gentleman last up (Mr. Williamson) says, that an appropriation of money being made by the bill now before us, and the treasury standing pledged for the payment, therefore a direct bounty is granted. At present, we pay in drawbacks about 45000 dollars; but we cannot say, that this sum will be adequate to the payment of the drawbacks next year: for if a greater quantity of fish be taken, a greater sum of course must be allowed: and as the sum depends entirely on the quantity of fish, it is impossible to ascertain beforehand the precise amount; there is not however, in the whole bill any thing of a bounty, except the bare name. The gentleman allows that we may commute the present drawbacks, and give them to the fisherman instead of the merchant: but it is impossible to do this with safety in any other mode than that pointed out in the bill—Shall we leave it to the fisherman, to be determined by his oath? This would not be advisable.

The plan proposed is a much less exceptionable one; it is founded on a calculation, that a certain quantity of tonnage is employed in taking a certain quantity of fish:—on this calculation the allowance is apportioned to the tonnage: if gentlemen think the allowance too high, let the sum be reduced; but let it not be stigmatized as a bounty: it is no such thing.—The word 'Bounty' is an unfortunate expression; and I wish it were entirely out of the bill.

Mr. Livermore. The bill now under consideration has two important objects in view. The one is, to give encouragement to our fishermen, and by that encouragement, to increase their numbers: the other is to govern those fishermen by certain laws, by which they will be kept under due restraint. Both these objects are of great importance to such persons as choose to employ their capitals in the fishery business: and I believe it will not be disputed that the business itself is of considerable importance to the United States, inasmuch as it affords a certain proportion of remittance or exportation to foreign countries; and does not impoverish the country, but enriches it by the addition of so much wealth drawn from the sea.

It is the object of those gentlemen, who favor the bill, that the fishermen should have some encouragement, not given to them at the expense of the United States, but directed to them out of what was, in the former law, called a drawback of the duty on salt.

The calculation, as I understand, has been made as nearly as possible, to give that drawback not to the merchants who export the fish, but to the fishermen who take it, in order to encourage that description of men, without whose assistance it is in vain to expect any benefit from the fisheries: for if the merchants, at present engaged in that branch, possessed the whole capital of the United States, yet if they cannot get fishermen, they cannot carry on the fishery: this is done by a particular class of men, who must be not only expert seamen, but also accustomed to taking the fish and curing it. If these men cannot be had, the capital cannot be employed; and those who undertake the business, cannot carry it on, or reap any profit from it.

Whilst the drawback is payable only to the merchant who exports the fish, it is impossible to convince the fishermen, that they reap from it any advantage whatever: or if some of the more discerning among them do perceive any advantage in it, the others who are not so clear-sighted, cannot discern it, and are therefore not disposed to undertake the business. It is however of considerable importance to the merchants, that the fisherman should receive a proper encouragement, even if they were obliged to allow him a bounty out of their own pocket.

The government of the fishermen, after their engagement in this business, is also necessary to be provided for: otherwise frequent instances may occur among that class of men, of quitting one vessel to embark on board another, or of shipping themselves for a foreign voyage, before the expiration of the fishing season. In the latter case, the vessel lies useless on the owners hands; and he, together with the whole expense of the out-fit, loses all his prospects of future gain.

The two objects here mentioned, are fully provided for in the bill. Still however it is objected to:—but what is the objection?—it is, that the word 'bounty' is twice used in this clause.—Let us now see what advantage will result from striking out this obnoxious 'bounty.'—None at all:—the bill says it shall cease; and have gentlemen any objection to the bounty's ceasing?—Since the bounty is to cease by this bill, what advantage in striking it out?—The sense would still remain the same: and I don't know why we should make a law expressly to strike out the word 'bounty,' but to strike out the bounty itself.

It is strange to me, that any gentleman, whether he is for giving a great bounty, or no bounty at all, should quarrel with this unfortunate word. There is indeed, one part of the section, which I will readily consent to strike out, and I believe every other gentleman who is in favor of the bill, will consent to it likewise; and that is, the clause which provides, that the bounty, to be allowed and paid on every vessel, for one season, shall not exceed one hundred and seventy dollars. If, when the vote is taken on the section, there does not appear a majority of the house in favor of striking out the whole, we may then move for striking out the proviso, if it be offensive to any gentleman: if it be not offensive, it may remain.

If gentlemen are disputing, only because the word 'bounty' is in the bill, they may be perfectly relieved from their uneasiness on that score: for the bill expressly says "that the bounty now allowed upon the exportation of dried fish, of the fisheries of the United States, shall cease; and in lieu thereof" a different kind of encouragement is to be given. Here is no reason to dispute about a word: if gentlemen are disposed to consent to the principle of the bill, that the drawback of the duties on salt shall be commuted for a certain sum to encourage the fishermen, they will vote in favor of the bill:—if not, they will vote against it. But it is impossible for me to conceive, why any gentleman under heaven should be against it: it is only fixing, for the merchants engaged in this branch, a clear and equitable ratio, for distributing among the fishermen that encouragement, which they think necessary in order to attach those people to the business, and to prevent them from going to other occupations, on land. The bill is an important one, and will increase that branch of business, which is very useful to the community:—it does not lay a farthing of bounty, or duty on any other persons, than those who are immediately concerned in it:—it will serve them; and will not injure any body.

Mr. Lawrance said, from examining the section, he conceived it contemplated no more than what the merchant is entitled to by existing laws. The merchant is now intitled to the drawback; but it is found by experience that the effect has not been to produce that encouragement to the fishermen which was expected; and he presumed the way was perfectly clear to give a new direction to the drawback—and this is all that is aimed at in the bill. He supposed that the clause had no necessary connection with the question which had been started, respecting the right of the government to grant bounties—but, since the question has been brought forward, it may be proper to consider it: in discussing the question, he enquired, what has Congress already done? Have we not laid extra duties on various articles, expressly for the purpose of encouraging various branches of our own manufactures—these duties are bounties to all intents and purposes; and are founded on the idea only of their conducting to the general interest.—Similar objections to those now advanced, were not made to these duties—they were advocated (some of them) by gentlemen from the Southward; he traced the effects of these duties, and shewed that they operated fully, as indirect bounties.

Mr. Lawrance then adverted particularly to the constitution—and observed that it contains general principles and powers only—these powers depend on particular laws for their operation; and on this idea he contended that the powers of the government must, in various circumstances extend to the granting bounties; he instanced in case of a war with a foreign power, will any gentleman say that the general government has not a power to grant a bounty on arms, ammunition, &c. should the general welfare require it? The general welfare is inseparably connected with any object or pursuit which in its effects adds to the riches of the country. He