

Philadelphia, April 12, 1792.



CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA.

THE following communications, from the President of the United States, were read in the House of Representatives on Friday the 13th inst.

Gentlemen of the Senate, and House of Representatives,

I HAVE thought it proper to lay before you, a communication of the 11th inst. from the minister plenipotentiary of Great-Britain, to the secretary of state, relative to the commerce of the two countries; together with their explanatory correspondence, and the secretary of state's letter to me on the subject.

GEO. WASHINGTON.

April 13, 1792.

Philadelphia, April 13, 1792.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to lay before you a communication from Mr. Hammond, minister plenipotentiary of his Britannic majesty, covering a clause of a statute of that country relative to its commerce with this; and notifying a determination to carry it into execution henceforward.—Conceiving that the determination announced could not be really meant as extensively as the words import, I asked and received an explanation from the minister, as expressed in the letter and answer herein enclosed; and, on consideration of all circumstances, I cannot but confide in the opinion expressed by him, that its sole object is to exclude foreign vessels from the islands of Jersey and Guernsey.

The want of proportion between the motives expressed and the measure, its magnitude and consequences, total silence as to the proclamation on which the intercourse between the two countries has hitherto hung, and of which, in this broad sense, it would be a revocation, and the recent manifestations of the disposition of that government, to concur with this in mutual offices of friendship and good will, support his construction.

The minister moreover assured me verbally, that he would immediately write his court for an explanation, and in the mean time is of opinion, that the usual intercourse of commerce between the two countries (Jersey and Guernsey excepted) need not be suspended.

I have the honor to be, with sentiments of the most profound respect and attachment, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,
TH. JEFFERSON.

The PRESIDENT of the United States.

Philadelphia, April 11, 1792.

SIR,

I HAVE received by a circular dispatch from my court, directions to inform this government, that, considerable inconveniences having arisen from the importation of tobacco in foreign vessels into the ports of his majesty's dominions, contrary to the act of the 12th Charles 2. chap. 18. sect. 3. (commonly called the navigation act) it has been determined in future strictly to enforce this clause, of which I take the liberty of enclosing to you a copy; and I have the honor to be, with perfect esteem and respect, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) GEO. HAMMOND.

Mr. Jefferson:

12 Char. 2. Chap. 18. Sect. 3.

AND it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That no goods or commodities whatsoever, of the growth, production, or manufacture of Africa, Asia, or America, or of any part thereof, which are described or laid down in the usual maps or charts of those places, be imported into England, Ireland, or Wales, islands of Guernsey and Jersey, or town of Berwick upon Tweed, in any other ship or ships, vessel or vessels, whatsoever, but in such as do truly and without fraud, belong only to the people of England or Ireland, Dominion of Wales, or town of Berwick upon Tweed, or of the lands, islands, plantations or territories in Asia, Africa or America, to his majesty belonging, as the proprietors and right owners thereof, and whereof the master and three-fourths at least of the mariners are English, under the penalty of the forfeiture of all such goods and commodities, and of the ship or vessel in which they were imported, with all her guns, tackle, furniture, ammunition and apparel, one moiety to his majesty, his heirs and successors, and the other moiety to him or them who shall seize, inform, or sue for the same, in any court of record, by bill, information, plaint or other action, wherein no essoine, protection, or wager of law shall be allowed.

SIR,

I AM this moment favored with the letter you did me the honor of writing yesterday, covering the extract of a British statute forbidding the admission of foreign vessels into any ports of the British dominions, with goods or commodities of the growth, production, or manufacture of America.

The effect of this appears to me so extensive, as to induce a doubt whether I understand rightly the determination to enforce it, which you notify, and to oblige me to ask of you, whether we are to consider it as so far a revocation of the proclamation of your government, regulating the commerce between the two countries, and that henceforth no articles of the growth, production, or manufacture of the United States, are to be received in the ports of Great-Britain, or Ireland, in vessels belonging to the citizens of the United States?

I have the honor to be, with sentiments of the most perfect esteem and respect, Sir,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

TH. JEFFERSON.

The minister plenipotentiary of Great-Britain.

Philadelphia April 12, 1792.

SIR,

IN answer to your letter of this day, I have the honor of observing, that I have no other instructions upon the subject of my communication, than such as are contained in the circular dispatch, of which I stated the purport in my letter dated yesterday. I have, however, no difficulty in assuring you, that the result of my personal conviction is, that the determination of his majesty's government to enforce the clause of the act of navigation (a copy of which I transmitted to you) with respect to the importation of commodities in foreign vessels, has originated in consequence of the many frauds that have taken place in the importation of tobacco into his majesty's dominions, in foreign vessels, and is not intended to militate against the proclamation, or order of the king in council, regulating the commercial intercourse between Great-Britain and the United States, which I have every reason to believe still exists in full force, as I have not had the most distant intimation of its being revoked.

I have the honor to be, with the most perfect esteem and consideration, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,
(Signed) GEO. HAMMOND.

Mr. Jefferson.

Read in the House of Representatives the 17th inst.

REPORT of the committee to whom were referred the memorials of Joseph Ceracchi, a Roman sculptor.

THAT on examining the journals of the late Congress they find the following resolutions unanimously agreed to on the 7th August, 1783, to wit:

“Resolved, That an Equestrian Statue of General Washington be erected at the place where the residence of Congress shall be established.”

“Resolved, That the Statue be of bronze—The General to be represented in a Roman dress, holding a truncheon in his right hand, and his head encircled with a laurel wreath; the Statue to be supported by a marble pedestal, on which are to be represented, in basso relievo the following principal events of the war, in which General Washington commanded in person, viz. The evacuation of Bolton—The capture of the Hessians at Trenton—The Battle of Princeton—The action of Monmouth; and the surrender of York. On the upper part of the front of the pedestal, to be engraved as follows, “The United States in Congress assembled ordered this statue to be erected in the year of our Lord 1783, in honor of George Washington, the illustrious commander in chief of the armies of the United States of America, during the war which vindicated and secured their liberty, sovereignty and independence.”

The committee are of opinion, that the honor and dignity of government require a speedy and liberal execution of the said resolutions; and that the plan therein proposed for expressing the gratitude of our country for the services of her most beloved and illustrious citizen, be extended to exhibit to posterity, the triumph of liberty and virtue: The committee therefore submit the following resolutions;

“Resolved, That the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Secretary at War, for the time being, or any two of them, be appointed Commissioners, to cause the said Monument to be completed, agreeably to the said resolutions, with such additional ornaments emblematical of the virtue and heroism of the citizens of the United States, in effecting the late revolution, as may inspire reverence for republican government, and cherish that union and love of country, by which this great event has been achieved.”

Resolved, That Congress will provide at their next session for the payment of dollars per annum, for a term not exceeding 10 years, to complete the said monument.”

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

SATURDAY, APRIL 21.

The Speaker laid before the House a letter and report from the Secretary of the Treasury, on twenty-four petitions, respecting lost or destroyed certificates, and praying a renewal of them—referred to a select committee.

The memorial of sundry merchants of the city of New-York, respecting bankrupt laws, was referred to a select committee.

A message was received from the President of the United States, by Mr. Lear, his Secretary, notifying, that the President did this day approve and sign “An act authorizing the grant and conveyance of a certain tract of land to the Ohio Company of Associates.”

The following written message was also delivered by the Secretary: United States, April 21st, 1792.

Gentlemen of the Senate, and House of Representatives,

I lay before you the copy of a letter, which I have received from the Judges of the Circuit Court of the United States, for the Pennsylvania district, relative to the “Act to provide for the settlement of the claims of widows and orphans barred by the limitations heretofore established, and to regulate the claims to invalid pensions.”

GEO. WASHINGTON.

The letter referred to, was read and laid on the table.

Mr. Williamson presented a bill providing for the sale of lands in the territory of the United States, north-west of the river Ohio, which was read the first time.

An engrossed bill for raising a further sum of money for the protection of the frontiers, was read the third time, and the blanks therein filled up—and upon the question that the said bill do pass, it was resolved in the affirmative, as follows:

A Y E S.

Messrs. Ames, Barnwell, Benson, Boudinot, S. Bourne, B. Bourne, Brown, Clark, Findley, Fitzsimons, Gerry, Gilman, Goodhue, Gordon, Hartley, Hillhouse, Huger, Key, Kitchell, Kittera, Lawrence, Learned, Livermore, Moore, Muhlenberg, Murray, Niles, W. Smith, Steele, Sterrett, Sturges, Sylvester, Thatcher, Vining, Wadsworth, Ward, White—37.

N O E S.

Messrs. Ashe, Baldwin, Giles, Grove, Macon, Madison, Mercer, Page, Parker, Schoonmaker, Seney, Sheredine, J. Smith, I. Smith, Sunpter, Treadwell, Tucker, Venable, Williamson, Willis—22.

On the passing this bill, Mr. Page made the following remarks.—If the bill were what its title says it is, I should be the last man in this House to vote against it.—But it is so different from what its title represents it to be, that this, added to the objections which I have already made and heard against it, I shall vote against its passage.—Sir, it is not a bill for the protection of the frontiers, but for the encouragement of certain manufactures, and of the fisheries, and for the increase of the sinking fund—it is a bill very different from what it ought to be, and is about to pass, from what has fallen from some gentlemen, as a compromise for the assumption of the state debts, and an encouragement to the manufactures and fisheries.—Such compromise I cannot approve of; and such a bill I cannot vote for.—If it be thrown out, I think we may bring in one to answer its purpose much better.—It is improper to entangle this bill with matter foreign to it—there is no occasion to repeal the act for establishing a permanent revenue, to blend it with this bill.

Mr. Vining laid on the table a resolution that Congress should adjourn on the 5th of May, to meet again on the first Monday of

A motion made on Wednesday last, by Mr. Gerry, being called up, and in part agreed to, a committee was, pursuant thereto, appointed, to enquire into the state of the recruiting service and to report.

Mr. Boudinot moved, That a joint committee of both Houses be directed to wait on the President of the United States, to request he will recommend to the people of these states a day of public humiliation and prayer, to be observed by supplicating the Almighty for the safety, peace and welfare of the Union. Adjourned.

MONDAY, APRIL 23.

On motion of Mr. Dayton a committee was appointed to bring in a bill to authorize the grant and conveyance of a certain tract of land to John Cleves Symmes.

A bill providing for the sale of lands in the territory of the United States, north west of the River Ohio, was read the second time, and committed for to-morrow.

In committee of the whole on the bill providing for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.—Mr. W. Smith in the chair. Various amendments were proposed some of them agreed to, others rejected.

A motion was made by Mr. Page, to strike out the second section—Another motion was offered by Mr. Benson to amend it, by substituting the words of the Constitution relative to insurrections, &c.—both these motions were negatived after some debate.

Mr. Steele moved to strike out the latter part of the section, which empowers the President of the United States to march the militia of one state into another, to quell insurrections, &c. in case the militia of such state shall refuse, or be insufficient for the purpose.—This motion occasioned a lengthy debate, and was finally negatived.

Mr. Steele then moved to add a clause, which provided for the intervening of a session of Congress previous to the exercising this power—This was also negatived.

A motion, made by Mr. Madison, was agreed to, by which the section was modified so as to restrict the exercise of this power, to the recess of Congress, and till — days after the next session shall commence.

Mr. Baldwin moved another amendment to this section, which was agreed to, providing that information of any insurrection or opposition to the laws of the Union, which may require the interposition of the military power, shall be communicated to the President of the United States by one of the Associate Justices, or the district Judge.