



CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA.

FRIDAY, MARCH 9.

On the bill declaring the assent of Congress, to certain acts of the State of Maryland, &c.

MR. GILES moved to strike out the first clause, and made sundry remarks on the unequal operation of a law of Maryland which should subject the vessels of other States to a tax solely for the benefit of the port of Baltimore. It is designed by this bill to raise a fund to be applied for the removal of a natural obstruction in the navigation of that port—and hence he considered it as a perpetual tax on the citizens of other States—in this view he objected to it, as a partial imposition—it was much complained of, he said, by the neighboring ports; he hoped therefore the clause would be struck out.

Mr. Seney supported the clause; he observed that tho the port of Baltimore would be benefited in the first instance, yet it was by no means a partial business, the accommodation and safety to shipping resulting from it had an important reference to the commerce of the union; it contributes to the security of navigation both foreign and domestic—and the importance of the trade of that place was sufficiently obvious from the amount of the revenue collected there; the salutary effects of the regulations which have been adopted and sanctioned by Congress, he conceived were sufficient reason for continuing those regulations.

Mr. Goodhue and Mr. Gerry offered a few remarks in opposition to the regulation, and said the provision might be extended with equal propriety to various other parts of the union—it ought not therefore to be taken up except on general principles.

Mr. Murray defended the regulation of the bill on general principles—he considered it in the light of a turnpike road—which though it may subject the citizens to a tax, they are abundantly compensated by the benefits resulting from the accommodation thereby provided; the tonnage paid is a small duty, applied expressly to this object, and cannot reasonably be considered as an oppressive or partial tax—and it is paid by those who are immediately benefited—and is in every sense reciprocal.

Mr. Niles said he had seconded the motion for striking out, on a mistaken apprehension—he had supposed the money to be collected was to go into the public Treasury, but the remarks of the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Murray) had undeceived him and he thought his comparison to a turnpike road was in point; he then enlarged on this idea, and said he could not conceive what injury would result from extending the principle to any part of the union where similar obstructions exist.

Mr. Sterrett supported the clause, he gave a short history of the business, and then enlarged on the general policy of the measure; it had been objected to by one gentleman on constitutional ground—this was an objection which he had not expected, but he conceived it totally unfounded, as no partial preference was contended for, but merely the continuance of a regulation which had been sanctioned by the general government, and was clearly within the spirit and letter of the clause which has reference to the commerce and navigation of the States; it is a regulation of a general nature, that tends to the advancement of the trade of the union as well as of that particular port.

Mr. Ames and Mr. White both spoke in favor of the clause—the latter observed that it appeared to him perfectly constitutional.

Mr. Giles denied that the benefits resulting from the regulation were reciprocal; they are confined to the town of Baltimore—and if the clause is agreed to, he said he should move for a bill to confer similar benefits on all other sea-port places laboring under natural impediments in their harbors.

Mr. Hartley supported the clause on general principles, and said he should advocate a law which has for its object similar regulations in respect to any other place laboring under the like difficulties.

Mr. Wadsworth said as an owner of shipping he should give his consent to any law which provides for removing the obstructions in navigation. No impositions are paid with more cheerfulness than those which are designed to procure safety and accommodation to the shipping.—He enlarged on the advantages which result to the general interest both of the merchant and

would wish well to, and assist all in his power to carry such an undertaking into execution; this I think is requiring no great exertion of patriotism or love of our country, provided it will not be materially prejudicial to his interest; it becomes, therefore, every citizen's duty to subscribe to this scheme; and whether it will be prejudicial or advantageous to own a share or shares in this company, shall now be the object of my enquiry.

To contend that to receive 25 per cent on money, is advantageous, would be to the highest degree ridiculous and absurd: the only question is, whether the cutting of this canal is practicable at a reasonable expence? Colonel Senf, one of the most skilful engineers, perhaps in America, has estimated the expence at 60,000*l.* which together with the debts of the company amounts in the whole to about 60,000*l.* this is generally thought a very high estimation, and perhaps the expence will prove still lower than is generally thought. In the time of Charles the 2d, it was in contemplation to join the rivers Forth and Clyde, in Scotland, by a canal 25 miles long, 4 feet deep, and 24 wide, and the expence was calculated at 75,000*l.* Supposing the ground of the present canal to be similar to the ground in that, the expence of the present, upon the same calculation, would be but 42,857*l.* But the ground through which the present canal will be cut is much more favorable to the intention, than the ground through which the Scottish canal passed. In that case too, it was necessary to carry the canal over large rivers, by means of aqueduct bridges, built at a very great expence, and which frequently stood in need of repairs. From the great descents too in different parts of it, numerous locks were requisite: here from the nature of the ground, no aqueduct bridges will be necessary, and the equality of the country, will render many locks needless.

But allowing the expence to be 60,000*l.* the number of boats which will use this canal, will easily pay 25 per cent on this sum. The company have divided their stock into a thousand shares, each share will therefore amount to 60*l.* the interest of which will amount to 15*l.* This share, therefore, when the canal is completed, will be worth to an English money-holder 30*l.* the interest in England being 5 per cent; to a Dutchman it will be worth still more, the interest in Holland being less; but allowing a holder to receive the interest for which the bank discount, 6 per cent, a share in the intended canal will be worth 25*l.*—20 shillings in 6 per cents. sells at present for 24*l.*; shares in the canal company, at 25*l.* will be equally profitable to the buyer, as if he were to buy 1*l.* in 6 per cents. for 20 shillings, which he can immediately sell for 24 shillings.

The above calculations suppose the canal to be finished; but as it will be some time before it will be in a situation to take toll, something must be deducted on that account; it is calculated that the canal will be near six years in preparing, allowing ten pounds for the interest of the different 10*l.* per annum payments, the whole amount of a share will be 70*l.* It is, however, most probable that the canal will be finished in less time than six years, consequently the interest will be less; but whether it is a less or a greater time, the value of shares will rise very high the first three months after the subscription is full. It is a well known fact to a number of persons in town, that there are agents here who are directed to buy up shares for employers in the northern states; a very little delay, therefore, may prevent those who would wish it, from becoming subscribers. A subscription of this kind in Philadelphia was filled up in one hour.

To the profits arising from the canal, something is to be added for the increase of the value of the lands which the company will own on both sides of the canal, and for the ferry they are to establish over Santee river, opposite the canal; which will be the most profitable ferry in the state.

Upon the whole, I am of opinion that every person who thoroughly considers this subject, will think that it is such an one as every good citizen will promote, both in regard to the interest of this country and his own.

REFLECTOR.

FROM THE COLUMBIAN CENTINEL.

MR. PRINTER,

IN the Congressional debate, on the Mint Bill, I took notice that the objection of some members to having the head of the President for the time being, struck on the coin of the United States, originated in the FEAR, that at some future period a person resembling a NERO, a CALIGULA, or a HELIOGABULUS, might sustain that important office. This objection, like many others which proceeded from the same source, to me appears weak and deceptive. The choice of a First Magistrate of the United States, originates in THE PEOPLE—and the man whom they chuse, let him be whom he may, is deserving every honor that a free people can confer, notwithstanding certain visionaries may think proper to style him a NERO, or what they please.

Indeed, Mr. Printer, the people are not much indebted to those members for the opinion they form of their judgment! Or, do they in the plenitude of their wisdom and discretion, suppose that they are guardians of the good sense of the community, and every object of the people's choice must first receive their approbation?—It seems so, or why do they suspect that the people of America will elect a CALIGULA for their President?—My opinion is, that rulers exceed the bounds of their duty, when they attempt to call in question the propriety of THE CHOICE of the people—and if it could even be supposed that they would ever unite to chuse a person resembling a NERO—that person ought to be honoured and respected.

April 7, 1792.

A CITIZEN.

AN enthusiastic French writer, on the folly of dreading a Counter-Revolution in France, says—"We want not Generals to lead us.—In such a cause every province in France will supply its CONDE, its TURENNE, and a glorious band of patriots, emulous of WASHINGTON's immortalized character.—THE ENEMY OF DESPOTISM."

ANECDOTE OF THE EMPRESS OF RUSSIA.

WHEN the late Mr. Peyton had finished the six pictures, representing the destruction of the Turkish fleet (in which Mortimer painted the figures) he gave directions to have them engraved, and requested the Empress would permit him the honour of inscribing the prints to her—at the same time she would communicate to her Ambassador her commands relative to the language in which the dedication should be written, as he did not know whether she would have it in Russian or French. Her reply was memorable:—"Let the dedication be written in the language spoken by the artist who painted the pictures."

CONNECTICUT ANECDOTE.—A criminal confined in Newgate for life, being asked how he liked his situation—replied very well, and thought himself in a much better condition than his Excellency Governor HUNTINGTON; who was continually trembling from fear of being turned out of office; while he was perfectly happy in an ESTABLISHED PROVISION for life.

farmer from the shipping being able to penetrate far into the country by the navigable rivers; similar applications, said he, may be made from other quarters, and if they should he would give his assent to them.

Mr. Fitzsimons added some observations in favor of the clause—and then the question being put the motion for striking out was negatived.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25.

A motion by Mr. Gerry that the house should meet at 10 o'clock, A. M. was agreed to.

The report of the committee on the petition of Charles Caldwell and William Robertson, was read and laid on the table, the report was in favor of the prayer of the petition.

The House took into consideration the amendments proposed by the committee of the whole to the bill providing for calling forth the militia, to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections and repel invasions: The House agreed to some and disagreed to others of the amendments—a clause was added for limiting the act to two years; the bill was then ordered to be engrossed for a third reading.

Mr. Bourne of the committee on enrolled bills reported that the bill entitled an act to indemnify the estate of the late Major-General Greene, for a bond entered into by him during the late war, was examined and found truly enrolled.

The message of the Senate proposing a conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses respecting the militia bill was taken into consideration—and a committee of conference appointed, consisting of Mr. Clark, Mr. White and Mr. Murray.

A message from the Senate by Mr. Secretary Otis, informed the House that they concur in the resolution for adjourning the 5th of May next.

The House took into consideration the amendments proposed by the committee of the whole to the bill to regulate processes in the Courts of the United States, and to provide for the compensation of the officers, jurors and witnesses—they made some progress in the business, but, without finishing it, Adjourned.

THURSDAY, APRIL 26.

The bill providing for calling forth the militia, &c. was brought in engrossed, read the third time, the blanks filled, and the bill passed.

Mr. Williamson of the committee to whom was referred the report of the Secretary of the Treasury respecting lost or destroyed certificates, brought in a report, in substance, that provision ought to be made in the case—but that there will not probably be time to do it the present session—and therefore proposes a resolution for referring the subject to the next session.

A report from the committee to whom the petition of Lewis and Charles Guaranzai was referred, was read—this report was lengthy, and in favor of Lewis Guaranzai.

The report on the petition of C. Caldwell and William Robertson was referred to the committee of the whole on the bill making further appropriations.

The House proceeded in discussing the amendments to the bill regulating processes in the Courts of the United States, and finished the same.

Mr. Steele moved an additional clause providing for compensating attorneys in the territory south-west of the Ohio, who may be employed to prosecute in behalf of the United States, in the Courts of North-Carolina, as the attorneys of that State are compensated. This amendment was not agreed to.

A motion to re-commit the bill being made and negatived, it was ordered that the bill pass to the third reading.

Mr. W. Smith moved to take into consideration the report of the committee on the memorials of Mr. Ceracchi, the Roman sculptor—this motion was seconded, and the question being put, it was negatived.

The House took into consideration the resolutions of the committee of the whole relative to alterations in the excise law, and agreed to the same—a committee was then appointed to prepare and report a bill accordingly.

Mr. Heister moved as an instruction to the committee, in substance, as follows—That they be instructed to report a separate act for the duties on spirits distilled from articles the growth of the country; this motion was disagreed to.

In committee of the whole on the bill to authorize the grant and conveyance of a certain tract of land to John C. Symmes and his associates. Mr. B. Bourne in the Chair. The committee reported the bill with one amendment, which being taken into consideration by the House, and further amended, was agreed to. The bill was then ordered to be engrossed for a third reading.

Mr. Gerry moved that the House should resolve itself into a committee of the whole, on the bill for reducing the rates of postage on newspapers—this was seconded by several members, and the question being put, it was negatived—29 to 22.