



CONGRESS.

PHILADELPHIA.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

THURSDAY, APRIL 12, 1792.

MILITIA BILL.

The section empowering the President of the United States to call out the Militia, added as an amendment to the bill by the Senate, under consideration.

MR. MERCER opposed the section. He considered the subject too important to receive a hasty decision; and as the session is so near its close, and no immediate necessity exists to make the provision, he hoped it would be postponed to the next session.

Mr. Steele objected to the section—he considered it as having an inauspicious aspect—that it was an insult to the majesty of the people to hold out the idea that it may be necessary to execute the laws at the point of the bayonet. He moved as an amendment, “that nothing in this act shall be construed to empower the President to march the militia of one state into another.” He said he had no doubt that there were in every state a sufficient number of persons well informed, and attached to government, to quell any insurrection, and to restore good order.

Mr. Benson supported the section—he observed that the question must be met some time or other—and he conceived that it would be a perfect nullity to pass a militia law without the provision contemplated by the amendment—for, he asked, to what purpose is it to constitute a militia, if they are not to be made any use of to support the laws. According to a doctrine which was avowed in the House yesterday, the institution of a militia is to enable the individual states to oppose the encroachments which may be made on them by the general government! This he conceived was an entire new doctrine, such a doctrine as was never before heard of. What sort of government must that be, which is authorized to pass laws, and at the same time has no power to carry those laws into execution? He said that such a discretionary power was lodged in the supreme executive of the several states, and for exactly the same purposes specified in the amendment; and he had never heard it objected to before. Gentlemen contend that this power is proper, as it respects the several states, but highly improper as it respects the government of the United States. What sort of a situation said he, does this place this government in?

Mr. Williamson objected to the amendment, as imperfect in its construction, and as containing some dangerous principles.

Mr. Livermore also opposed the amendment.

Mr. Gerry opposed the amendment, as vesting a dangerous power in the supreme executive; that circumstances did not render the delegation necessary. The people of the several states appear disposed to submit to the laws, and such an exigency ought not to be anticipated.

Mr. Murray said he had voted in the affirmative on the amendment which had just been annexed to the amendment from the Senate, because it limited the duration of a power which struck his mind as rather large and undefined as to its objects. He should now vote against the whole as amended; and he was at liberty so to do, inasmuch as he had voted for the amendment, because he wished, if the gift of such power was to be made, to circumscribe at least its duration. He professed himself a friend to energetic government, but wished to communicate such energy through well defined channels, and to see it directed towards constitutional objects. He would go as far as most men in enforcing the laws of the union—in providing for the calling out of the strength of the community to preserve

peace and repel force—but he could not accede to the idea contained in the provision of that section, which was, that the time, the cause, and the place in which the militia were to be called out, should be all left to the discretion of one man. The theory of the government warranted no such dereliction of power in this House, nor its delegation to another. He imagined that as the constitution had contemplated the organizing of the militia separately from the provision for calling them into actual service, it would be most proper to separate these different objects in legislation. He therefore hoped the amendment, as amended, would be negatived, and that a committee would be appointed immediately to bring in a bill to accomplish its objects with proper modifications. To create and organize a militia, was one thing—to provide for calling it forth to execute the laws of the union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions, was another and separate object. These things were as separate in their natures, as they were diversified by relative inferiority and magnitude of objects. The ingenuity with which a weapon is formed, bears no comparison with the principles and wisdom under which its use and direction are to be applied. Of all the offices of politics, the most irksome and delicate is that by which a legislature directs the military force of the community to its own conservation, as it presupposes situations in which resistance to the government itself is contemplated. Hence we see a jealousy even in England of the use of the sword, when drawn against any part of the community. It was surely the duty of Congress to define with as much accuracy as possible those situations which are to justify the execution in its interposition of a military force. The bill he had in view, he hoped, would attempt to mark with precision the objects the constitution looked towards, under the words “execute the laws of the union, and suppress insurrections.” What was the occasion to warrant force of that species, was the first object—who was to judge of its existence, was another—the space or district to which the draught should be or not be confined, was another—and the duration of the service, another. Among these considerations, it could not be forgotten that the civil arm was ever to be united, if not commanding; and how far the marshals and judges of the courts of the union ought not to have a power on this subject, deserved more time than the House seemed inclined at present to give this bill. He would take the occasion to declare he had no jealousy as to abuses of power—but this government is to be administered according to written law, applying to defined objects and situations. It was a government of definition, and not of trust and discretion. After the objects are well described upon which the military force is to act, the evidence of the occasion settled, and the sphere and duration limited, he would heartily support the most energetic mode in which the object should be reached, and the occasion obeyed—he therefore hoped the amendment would be negatived, and leave given for a committee to bring in a separate bill.

PARIS, April 15. BY letters from Hamburg and Stockholm, we learn, that the King of Sweden died of his wound on the 29th of March. The Prince Royal has been proclaimed King—During the minority, the kingdom will be governed by the Duke of Sudermania in the capacity of Regent.

APRIL 6. M. Duranthon (an eminent lawyer of Bourdeaux) was appointed Minister of Justice on the 13th instant. Letter of M. Gouviou, to the President of the National Assembly.

PARIS, 14 April, 1792. MR. PRESIDENT, I have the honor to enclose my resignation to the office of Deputy to the National Assembly. Were I called upon to express my motives, I should say, that it would be too painful to me, to live any longer in a city, where some magistrates of the peo-

\* This gentleman was Colonel in the army of the United States during the late war.

ple, rejoicing in the triumph of the murderers of my brother and his fellow-soldiers, have humbled the National Guards, who were stepped forward to the execution of the law. Let me be placed with true friends to the constitution, and then it will be seen who defend it best, we, or the factious.

I am, &c.

GOUVION.

The following letter is said to have been written by fifty Bretons, on their arrival at Coblenz, to M. D'Artois:

SIR, “The Bretons have the honor to pay their respects to you; they ask for bread, arms, and the road to Paris.”

To which M. D'Artois answered. “I shall have, gentlemen, the happiness of dividing my own bread with you, of offering you my own sword (If I have no other weapon) and of marching at your head.”

The news of the death of the King of Sweden is confirmed in the most positive manner. This intelligence has influenced public credit, for no sooner did it reach Hamburg, but it produced a rise of the exchange with France. It is to be presumed that Sweden, in the embarrassments of a minority will not attempt to join the leagues of princes to which Gustavus was so much attached, and that this event will slacken the ardor of the Crusaders against the liberties of France.

Exchange at Paris on the 16th of April:

For 100 livres hard money, 156 livres in assignats, a louis d'or costs 40 livres 4 sels in assignats.

The above are extracted from the Gazette Universelle and Journal de Paris.

It is said that conspiracies have, since the death of Prince Potemkin, been forming in Russia, and that the empire is threatened with a revolution.

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, March 28.

In the opening of this morning's sitting, information was received that, in the department de Cantal, fresh riots have broke out, infinitely more terrible than those which had some time ago been happily quelled. The chateaux are in a blaze; and the property of individuals is a prey to the mob. The inhabitants, struck with terror, demand the most speedy succours.

Referred to the committee of twelve. Ordered—“That the thanks of the nation be voted to the Governor of Jamaica, to the British government, to the American Congress, and to the State of Pennsylvania, for the succours granted to the colony of St. Domingo.”

LONDON, April 5.

Yesterday a messenger came express from Paris to the French Minister; it is said, that he brings information that the National Assembly, from the answer of Prince KAUNITZ, had judged it the most prudent and effectual means of securing permanency to the constitution to declare war against the King of Hungary, whom they consider as only tampering to watch the most favorable opportunity of overturning the objects of the French Revolution.

A messenger has been dispatched by our government to Earl Gower at Paris, to direct him to explain, and, if possible, conciliate the transaction in the East-Indies.

APRIL 9.

Gustavus the Third, King of Sweden, was born in 1746, and succeeded his father in 1780. He possessed abilities greatly superior to those of his predecessor, and had much more ambition; his understanding had been cultivated, he had an insinuating address, and a graceful and commanding elocution. He was at Paris when his father died, and soon after his arrival at Stockholm, swore to preserve the constitution as established in 1772, and not to introduce absolute sovereignty. He did every thing to gain the affections of the Nobles and the People. He gave public audiences three times a week, and to have received an injury was certain of procuring an introduction; he listened to the meanest of his subjects with affability, and entered into the minu-

test details that concerned them, by which means he made himself adored. But at the same time he was fomenting the differences between the States, and, by his emissaries, sowing discontent among the people, until finding the business ripe, he in one hour made the whole Senate prisoners, totally overturned the mode of government, rendering himself in fact, tho not in appearance, one of the most absolute Monarchs in Europe.

His death must give great joy to the friends of French liberty. The Swedish monarchs had long received pensions from France—and Gustavus of Holstein was an enthusiast for the old government.

The King of Sweden married Sophia Magdalena in 1776, Princess Royal of Denmark, by whom he had issue Gustavus Adolphus, born Nov. 1, 1778.

The assassin of the King of Sweden had been doomed by his majesty to a long and tyrannical imprisonment, for having thwarted his ambition in the late revolution and the overthrow of the nobles.

The conspiracy was discovered to have been formed against more lives than that of the King, but mentions only the Duke de Sudermania as having been upon the list of proscribed Nobility.

When the packet that carried Dr. Willis to Portugal entered the Tagus they were met by the royal barge with 120 oars, attended by two cutters, one of which, enquired “If the great physician was on board;” which being answered in the affirmative, the other cutter drew near the packet, and the prince and princess of Brazil appearing on the quarter-deck, the Doctor was formally announced by the Captain; but declining to go on shore in state, was conducted to the Duke of Northumberland's hotel, where he was met by Monsieur Pinto, the late ambassador to our court, and several other distinguished personages.

The Syren, Captain Manly; the Andromeda, Capt. Salisbury; and the Flyena, Capt. Kinnier, all at Plymouth, are ordered instantly to the West-Indies. The discussions respecting the slave trade will, no doubt, find their way to our colonies in the speediest manner—to prevent any disturbances which may be produced by an improper use of these discussions, is probably the reason for this sudden increase of our naval force in that quarter.

Saturday evening the remains of the late Earl of Bute arrived at Glasgow from London, in a hearse drawn by six horses, with several mourning coaches following, and lay in state that night in the Black Bull Inn there. The Coffin was covered with red velvet, on the sides of which were five large coronets, and two stars.

Yesterday Captain John Kimber, of the ship Recovery, belonging to Bristol, was brought before Sir Samuel Wright, from the city of Bristol and committed to take his trial for the murder of one or more Negro women, whom he was transporting as slaves from Calabar, in Africa, to the West-Indies.

The husband of a vocal heroine is said to have procured a cornetcy of dragoons through superior interest, on condition that he leaves his baggage behind him when he goes upon service.

CANADA.

The military force at present in Canada consists of a detachment of artillery, the royal fusiliers, commanded by his Royal Highness Prince Edward, the 4th, 5th, 20th, 24th, 26th, and 65th regiments of foot, and Col. Simcoe's new-raised corps.

DR. PRIESTLEY'S CAUSE.

In about nine hours after the beginning of the trial, the jury returned their verdict for 2502l. 18s. being 169l. 13s. 9d. less than Dr. Priestley's claim, which was 4222l. 11s. 9d.

A SCRAP ON KINGS.

Kings surely stand on slippery places! The prices current of monarchs, in Europe, has lately suffered a rapid fall. England's light—France's insignificant—The Empire's poisoned—Sweden's assassinated—Portugal's crazy—Russia's superannuated—Denmark's weak—Prussia's mad—but Poland's nappy.