

# CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.  
MONDAY, January 14.

*The memorial of officers of several lines of the late army of the United States; being under consideration, in committee of the whole, a motion was made to reject the prayer of the memorials.*

Mr. SEDGWICK observed that he did not rise to express an opinion as to any vote which he might ultimately give on the subject now before the committee. It was undoubtedly an important subject—important, as it respects the character of the applicants, and as it involved a consideration of the services which had been rendered by them. No man had a more respectful opinion than he entertained of the honorable patriotism of those brave and meritorious citizens, who had ventured their lives in defence of their country. No man would more regret than himself, that those services should remain unremunerated. Thus feeling, he should be sorry if the motion of the gentleman from New-Jersey should preclude a discussion of the various questions which might otherwise arise in the contemplation of this subject.

He said he knew several gentlemen who believed that it was impracticable to grant the prayer of the memorials, without producing evils, so many and so great, as infinitely more than to counterbalance the benefits intended. That it would be a criminating reflection on gentlemen who, with so much warmth of declamation, had espoused the cause of the applicants, to suppose that they forelaw those evils and were not prepared to guard against them. It would be indirectly charging upon them as the motive of their conduct, to give an approving countenance to an impracticable object, an intention of acquiring popularity at the expense of the reputation of the government. This was a charge he had no disposition to make; he would therefore suppose the gentlemen had digested some scheme, in their opinion of practicable compensation; which, by what they have said, they have pledged to bring forward to the consideration of the committee; but they would be precluded from doing it, should the mover of the present question persist in having the fate of the memorials decided on his motion.

He said that, confident in the hope that the gentleman would gratify the wishes of his friends, he would take the liberty of mentioning some of the embarrassing questions which the committee must meet in the progress of this business.

The whole merit of the present application, in his opinion, rested on the supposition that by the terms of the funding law the government had made a saving to itself; or, to speak with more precision, to the debtor part of the community. In other words, that by the terms of the loan an adequate provision was not made for the public debt. This supposition is denied by many gentlemen, who did not hesitate expressly to declare, that the provision is ample and ought to be satisfactory. Others, he said, went further, and even insinuated that there existed a sympathetic sensibility between the majority of Congress and the public creditors, injurious to the great body of the people. This saving constituted that residuum of the original contract which was the subject of the present demand. If then there was no saving there was no residuum—no subject of distribution. On this idea, the application is to the generosity, not the justice of Congress. On this ground the memorials, he presumed, were not advocated by those gentlemen. Should it, however, be demonstrated that the contemplated saving had been made to the public, he asked whether this was the only description of creditors to whom injustice had been done? and would not the same arguments which should demonstrate their rights prove equally the title of every other original holder to further provision? Was there any discriminating principle by which it would appear that these men alone were entitled to redress for a violation of justice? These questions were important, and being obvious, they must have occurred to the gentlemen; who, it might reasonably be presumed, had come prepared, if not with satisfactory, at least with plausible answers.

He said, that among the evils which had been endured during our struggle for freedom and independence, was a lapse of public credit, by which there had been apportioned a severe tax on the citizens; and although this was not in exact proportion, yet it was generally more equal than probably any re-apportionment would make it. It was said, at least by some, that by comparing the relative circumstances of the army before and since the war, with the community at large, it might be presumed that they had not contributed to this tax beyond their proportion. If on the whole, the claim of the army could not be distinguished from that of the other original creditors, and if justice required the provision contended for, then it would follow irresistibly, that an account was to be opened with each original creditor; that even if a distinction could be discovered which would authorize a difference between the army and every other description of creditors, it was, he said, further asked, by gentlemen who believed the project to be impracticable, whether it was intended, by a further distinction, to separate the officers from the soldiers, to provide for the former and not for the latter? If one part of the dilemma was chosen it would operate manifest injustice, if the other the government would open those sources of speculation which seemed to threaten to inundate the country with enormous evils. He said, gentlemen who were disposed to afford a favorable countenance to the present applications had undoubtedly considered these effects, and had also considered the means of preventing those evils, and candor required that they should be indulged with an opportunity of exhibiting their system.

He said that it was further objected that the proposed measure would materially alter the

funding system, a strict adherence to which was guaranteed to the public by an almost unanimous vote of both Houses.

He said the objections he had mentioned were among the most important of those which had occurred on this subject; that a discussion of them would open an extensive field of argument. He thought it would be of public utility that they should be discussed, he therefore again solicited the gentleman from New-Jersey to withdraw his motion, that an opportunity might be afforded to gentlemen to bring forward a digested system.

Mr. Boudinot assured the committee, that he had determined not to trouble them on this subject, and he should have carried that determination into execution, did he not find that the question was likely to be taken in a manner not altogether pleasing to him. He had expected that the claims of the officers would have been fairly met, and if decided in the negative, those gentlemen would have gone away fully satisfied that their claims had received a fair and candid discussion: But he feared, from the arguments of gentlemen, that the idea that the United States had unjustly failed in performing the contract with the army, would take place, and an ungrounded imputation of partiality (at least in the minds of the petitioners) would be left on the government; when Mr. B. thought, a fair statement of the matter would undoubtedly put a very different face on the whole business. The officers of the army had come forward as creditors of the United States in a decent and becoming manner, and presented their claims founded on former contracts, which they conceived had not been fulfilled, and therefore they called on government to do what was right and just on the occasion. Congress were the independent representatives of the whole union, to whom every citizen ought to have free access, and where every citizen was to be considered as equally entitled to an impartial hearing. If on examination it should appear that justice required a farther compensation to the petitioners as a class of public creditors, when considered on a general scale, no man in the house would be more ready than himself to give his voice for such a measure. But if it should appear that the contract on the part of the public had been complied with, as far as distributive justice would permit, he wished the petitioners to be convinced of it, and that those losses they had met with, were such as had been equally borne by other creditors of the union, and therefore a general burthen, by which he hoped they would receive full satisfaction on this subject.

Mr. Boudinot, while he acknowledged the patriotism and virtue of the American army, and subscribed fully to their eminent services and patient sufferings, he could not join in deprecating the essential services and sufferings of the other public creditors of the United States, who in the day of her distress had administered their property, to the support of that army and the defence of the union. All public creditors who presented themselves in the day of distress to the relief of the Union, were equally entitled to the attention of Congress; but as the officers in their memorials had applied in behalf of the army alone, he wished to consider their case, in the first instance, abstractly, without connecting it with any other class of creditors, and then compare it with others of their fellow-citizens.

He undertook, therefore, in the first place, to state the public conduct towards the army from the beginning to the commencement of the present government—He would then examine the conduct of the present government, and lastly, supposing their claim just, enquire into the practicability of it.

The committee were well acquainted with the rise and progress of the late war. At the first alarm the patriotic citizens of the colonies flew to their arms and formed in the field, without terms or stipulations as to their services. In 1775 Congress turned their attention to the army as the first great object, and having organized it, fixed the pay at the rate of 50 dollars for a colonel, and 20 dollars for a captain. In 1776, desirous of encouraging citizens who were so zealous in their country's service, they gave a bounty of 20 dollars to each private, amounting in the whole to upwards of 200,000 dollars, besides a promise of 100 acres of land, and to the officers at the rate of 500 acres to a colonel, and the rest in proportion. In October of the same year, desirous of keeping up the zeal of the officers, they increased the pay in proportion of 75 dollars to a colonel, and 40 dollars to a captain, and gave a suit of clothes per annum to every private, or 20 dollars in cash. In Dec. 1777, Congress shewed their desire of encouraging the service, by giving a month's extra pay to the army. The officers, anxious for their future support after the war was over, expressed an earnest desire of having some provision of this sort anticipated, and Congress in compliance with their desires, after a consideration of three months or more, agreed in May 1778, to give each officer half pay for 7 years after the end of the war, on condition that they did not hold any office of profit under any individual state, and 80 dollars to each private. In November following they gave to each supernumerary officer one year's pay extraordinary, and increased the allowance for every retained ration to 2s. 6d. in money. The army, not being satisfied with this provision, in August 1779 a committee appointed for the purpose reported farther provision of half pay for life, without any condition in favour of those who should continue till the end of the war, and recommended to the states to provide for widows of officers and soldiers who should be killed in the service. Congress likewise increased the allowance of monthly subsistence for officers to 500 dollars for a colonel, a captain 200 dollars, and a private 10 dollars, and added to all this, Congress allowed the officers to receive from the public stores one hat, a watch coat, body coat, four vests, four pair breeches, four shirts, four stocks, six pair stockings, four pair shoes, per annum, nearly at

former prices, and the soldiers in proportion. The half pay for life was adopted, to the great offence of individual states, who sent forward petitions against the measure as impolitic and unjust. The war continuing, the distresses of the country increased, which reduced the public credit so low, as to produce great uneasiness among all classes of public creditors, both in the army and country.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Hartley) in his argument represented (in Mr. B's opinion) his own feelings on the occasion, rather than a comparative view with the sufferings of the citizens at large; for it is not uncommon, when gentlemen are connected with a particular class of sufferers, to view what he sees and hears: as an exclusive and peculiar evil, without considering what passes elsewhere. Thus the soldier considers the sacrifice of the army as the only intolerable burthen, while the merchant, knowing his own losses best, considers other's complaints as trifling to his; and the farmer, who earns every farthing by the sweat of his brow, blames the government for not giving him the first place in all their systems. Yet the fair conclusion is, that the burthen has been generally nearly equal, and a common tax for the defence of our country—And although Mr. B. readily subscribed to the great sufferings and patriotic exertions of the army, yet they should also give credit for the attention of their country, to the utmost of her abilities. As the gentleman from Pennsylvania is best acquainted with the line of his own state, Mr. Boudinot undertook to mention what was done by Pennsylvania for her own officers in addition to the allowances of Congress.—During the war, stores were provided, from which they received a partial supply at the hard money prices.—The depreciation of their pay was fully made up to them; at the sales of the confiscated estates their certificates were received as hard money; the same for lands in the land-office;—the interest of 6 per cent. was paid on their certificates for a number of years;—an additional bounty of land was given to them, ready surveyed and free from expense; and when the funding system took place, they had their 3 per cent. and deferred debt made good to 6 per cent. by additional certificates from the state, which were afterwards redeemed at about 50 and 37 per cent. in hard money.

In August 1782, a memorial from the state of Pennsylvania called loudly on Congress for fresh exertions towards the settlement of all accounts, and making provision for the paying off the public debt. It is supposed the army took the hint, and in December following, a deputation of field officers with a strong memorial on behalf of the army, waited on Congress. The substance of their request was, 1st. some prefer pay—2d. a settlement of their accounts and security for their balances—and 3dly, a commutation of their half pay for life; as they found that the measure was odious to their fellow-citizens, and would prevent the happy intercourse they expected on their return to private life. The present pay and settlement of accounts were immediately provided for, and as to security for the balances, Congress resolved, "as to what relates to the providing of security for what shall be found due on such settlement, that the troops of the United States, in common with all the creditors of the same, have an undoubted right to expect such security, and that Congress will make every effort in their power to obtain from the respective states substantial funds adequate to the object, &c. &c."

As to the commutation, it was urged on the part of the army, that five or six years full pay was but a reasonable sum to make good their sufferings, not only on account of the deficiency of their pay, but also on other accounts, and that it would be more agreeable to their fellow-citizens, than that they should be pensioners for life. Mr. B. mentioned this from his memory, which he said was confirmed by the Journals of Congress of February 1783, when a resolution proposed, was preface in this manner: "Whereas as in consequence of the faithful services of the officers of the army of the United States, and of their great sufferings, not only on account of the deficiency of their pay, but on other accounts, Congress have, by divers resolutions, promised them half pay, &c. &c. The want of money having been raised as an objection against this measure, the officers contended, that they expected nothing more than certificates for their balances, in the same manner as other creditors of the United States had received. Congress finally determined to grant their request; but to prevent the army from alienating their certificates at an under rate, and thereby affecting the public credit, it was proposed that they should not be made transferable. As soon as the delegation from the army were made acquainted with this, they spurned at the idea, and justly asked if they were not freemen—if the balances were not their own property; whether they had not the same right to dispose of their property as they pleased, with every other citizen? They therefore insisted to be put on a footing with every other creditor who had received certificates. The proposal was too forcible to be answered with propriety, and therefore Congress on the 22d March 1783, resolved, "That such officers &c. shall be entitled to receive the amount of five years full pay in money or securities on interest at 6 per cent. per annum, as Congress shall find most convenient, instead of the half pay promised for life; the said securities to be such as shall be given to other creditors of the United States, provided it is as the option of the lines of the respective states to accept or refuse the same." "That with regard to the retiring officers, the commutation, if accepted by them, shall be in lieu of whatever may be now due, as well as what might hereafter become due. &c. &c." This commutation amounted to 4,500 dollars to a colonel, and 2,400 dollars to a captain.

(Debate to be continued.)

WEDNESDAY, January 23.

A communication from the Executive of the state of Maryland was read, by which it appears that William Hindman, esq. is elected a repre-

guage; and he advised him, for his own safety, to leave the town as soon as he could, which advice the Bishop very wisely followed.

Citizen Anselme (Miss Anselme) sister of the brave General of the same name, who already has, in several encounters with the enemy, distinguished herself, not only by her valour, but also by her virtues, talents and love for the republic, has displayed in the army on the Var, the genius of the famous Montfort. She commands an army of 1500 men, and in the several engagements she has had with the enemy, she was always seen foremost with her glittering sabre in her hand, to encourage her men: and indeed this amiable and valiant amazon, who possesses great talents and a tried courage, will be the Clorinda of her age. She has well deserved to share her brother's glory.

## Domestic Articles.

NORFOLK, January 9.

On Sunday last arrived here the brig William Pennock, Capt. Williams, who sailed from Point Petre, Guadaloupe, on the 15th December. Four days before Capt. Williams left the island, the frigate La Felicite arrived at Dominica, in 35 days from France, and bro't news of the defeat of the Combined Forces, which set the whole island in a fermentation; the inhabitants were all quitting the island, in expectation of a fleet coming from France. Capt. Williams took in 20 passengers for St. Eustatia, where he arrived on the 18th, and found five more American vessels from different parts of the island, full of French passengers, and a number more momentarily expected. St. Eustatia was full of French people, and scarce a house to be got on any terms. At St. Martin's on the 20th ult. likewise found several more vessels from Guadaloupe, with 40, 50, and 60 passengers on board; also a vessel from Martinico, with passengers, who informed him that that island was in the same situation as Guadaloupe, which was continually under arms. A gentleman on board the vessel from Martinico says, 1700 of the inhabitants quitted the island, and all kinds of business was at a stand; nothing doing except fortifying the island, repairing the forts, and getting in order to arm the negroes against the fleet arrived from France which they expected. In Guadaloupe they purchased 80,000 stand of arms from the other islands; and on the first appearance of the fleet, the Planters were determined to arm their negroes to protect the White Flag. The frigate La Felicite got information of a French frigate who wore the White flag, manned with mulattoes, which the La Felicite gave chase to—the run into Back-Staff, Guadaloupe, under cover of the guns. The Captain of the La Felicite wrote the Governor of Guadaloupe, if he caught any Aristocratic Flags in the West-Indies, he was determined to sink them—he bent his course to Dominica, as he could not obtain any supplies in the French islands.

NORWICH, January 14.

Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Charleston (S. C.) to a friend in this town, dated December 24. 1792.

"A few days since departed this life, HENRY LAURENS, Esq. about 70 years of age, and his corpse was burnt the third day after his decease. This was done by his son, by request of the Father, who made this reserve in his will, that unless his son complied with this request, he should be cut short of any of his estate, which was worth about 60,000 sterling. The ashes remaining from the body were taken up and put into a silver urn provided for that purpose. The reason that Laurens gave for this singular desire, was, that his body was too good to be eaten by worms.

BALTIMORE, January 21.

FROM A CORRESPONDENT.

ANSWER to an English Paragraph exhibiting the difference between the French and American Revolutions, lately published in some of the Newspapers in the United States.

THERE is that difference between the French and American Revolutions, that the latter was not opposed by cunning priests, nor cruel aristocrats determined to overthrow every principle of honesty and humanity, for a chimera billed by common sense—A royal puppet, on this spot, did not dance on the wire of a band of courtiers, the most despicable and abandoned wretches that ever disgraced mankind—The focus of both despotism and nobility was far from this land of liberty, and its glorious adherents could not be infected with the pernicious breath of mad royalty and impudent aristocracy. The popular cause was opposed openly, sword in hand, and victoriously fought by the friends to the rights of men; had the French republicans met with such opponents, they had not done those excesses the Kings, the Nobles and Clergy have roused them to by the most perfidious contrivances—A King did not swear himself in America, nor had the American people more than one Arnold; their tempers were soured neither by misery nor by a complicated system of treachery, framed coolly, and pursued with the greatest obstinacy—The American people were not loaded with enormous taxes, that had reduced millions of their fellow citizens to the utmost misery, to maintain haughty plunderers in sloth and profligacy—All this odds must be reckoned by impartial men, to explain the difference insidiously delineated between the two Revolutions, by some desperate royalist, or a narrow-minded man.

PHILADELPHIA.

## PRICE OF STOCKS.

6 per Cents,	20/1
3 per Cents,	11/10
Deferred,	12/4
Full Shares Bank U. S.	34 per cent. prem.