

Congress of the United States.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Friday, February 13.

[TAKEN FOR THE FEDERAL GAZETTE.]

Mr. Early from the committee of commerce and manufactures, who were directed to inquire what alterations were necessary in the act prohibiting the importation of certain goods, wares and merchandize, presented a bill supplementary to that act (which takes of the restrictions imposed on a number of the articles specified therein). Read twice, and referred to a committee of the whole on Monday.

The bill from the senate, prohibiting settlements on lands belonging to the United States, until authorized by law, was read twice, and referred to the committee on public lands.

The bill from the senate to regulate the summons of grand jurors, was read twice and referred to a committee of the whole on Monday.

Mr. J. Clay presented a petition and memorial from the president and directors of the Chesapeake Canal Company, stating that they had made considerable progress in the work, but were unable to complete it, and praying the assistance of congress.—Ordered to lie on the table.

The engrossed bill to prohibit the importation of slaves, was read a third time and passed—ayes 118, nays 5.

A message was received from the senate, notifying that they had passed an act supplementary to the act establishing a mint and fixing the coinage of the United States.

The house went into committee of the whole, on the bill extending the time for locating Virginia military warrants, and for returning the survey thereof to the secretary of the war department. The blanks were filled up, (allowing three years for the first purpose, and five for the second) when the committee rose and reported the bill as amended, and it was ordered to have a third reading to-morrow.

The house went into committee of the whole on the "Bill respecting seizures made under the authority of the United States, and for other purposes." The committee of the whole reported the bill without amendment, and it was ordered to have a third reading to-morrow.

The house went into committee of the whole on the bill making appropriations for finishing the south wing of the capitol.

Mr. Lewis moved to fill the first blank with "25,000 dollars," for the purpose of finishing the south wing. Carried.

Mr. Lewis moved to fill the next blank with "20,000 dollars," for the purpose of furnishing the room for the accommodation of the house.

Mr. Gregg inquired whether the building would be in a situation to receive these accommodations before the next session of congress. They had been here seven years already, and it was not yet completed; he did not know but it might take seven years more to finish it.

Mr. Van Cortland said that want of money had been the cause of the delay.

Mr. Jackson did not know how much it would take to finish the house, but he thought that 20,000 dollars was too much to appropriate to furnish one room: In former times that sum would have been deemed sufficient to build and furnish a house.

Mr. Findley said that nothing was so easy as to find fault, especially with those who were not competent judges. For his part, he was no judge; but as so much had been already expended, he wished that we might enjoy the benefit of it.

Mr. Masters observed, that the house had appropriated 20,000 dollars for the fortification of all the forts & harbors in the U. States—and they were now about to appropriate the same sum for their own accommodation.

Mr. Macon did not know how much money it would require to furnish the house; but he judged from the size of the building. He believed that 20,000 dollars had been appropriated to furnish the president's house, besides the furniture of the old congress. He wished the house to be furnished in a convenient manner.

Mr. Lewis said it was immaterial to him whether any appropriation were made to furnish the house or not, as he did not know whether he should ever have an opportunity of sitting in it. The whole of the money, however, was not to be expended in furnishing one room: there were a number of committee rooms also to be furnished. He was perfectly willing to appropriate the sum mentioned, as it was to be laid out under the direction of the president of the United States.

Mr. Smilie observed, that on a former occasion he had voted against granting any further sum towards finishing this expensive building, from a belief that it would be better to appropriate 150,000 dollars and build a good brick house for the accommodation of congress. He denied that the delay in the building was occasioned by the want of money, which, he said, had been granted whenever called for.

The motion to fill the blank with "20,000 dollars" was lost. Several other sums were

proposed, but the blank was eventually filled with "17,000 dollars."

Mr. Lewis moved to fill the next blank with 50,000 dollars, for the purpose of altering and repairing the east side of the north wing of the capitol.

Mr. D. R. Williams moved to strike out the words "altering and."

Mr. Chandler inquired what alterations were to be made.

Mr. Lewis replied that he believed the principal alteration was to be made in the senate chamber and court-room.

Mr. Jackson said, that on recurring to the report of the superintendent, he found that 50,000 dollars were wanted towards altering the east side of the north wing. He was afraid that before we got through both sides it would cost a million.

Mr. D. R. Williams really thought that this money was to be expended on the senate room for the purpose of making it parliamentary: when the house got into the south wing, they would be some feet higher than the senate; it was necessary, therefore, that the senate room should be raised, in order that their messages might be sent down to the house; for his part, he would rather see the phrase reversed, and that their messages should be sent up to the house.

The question was then taken on striking out the words "altering and," and carried.

On motion of Mr. Jackson, the words "east side of," were also stricken out.

The blank was then filled with 25,000 dollars.

The committee of the whole rose, reported the bill amended, and it was ordered to be read a third time to-morrow.

The bill for the relief of Stephen Sayre was read a third time and passed.

Mr. Mumford, after some prefatory observations, in which he urged the necessity of being prepared for war by fortifying the Atlantic ports, and calling the attention of the house to the present desolated state of Europe, submitted the following resolutions:

1. Resolved, that it is expedient to appropriate the sum of dollars, to enable the president of the U. S. more effectually to fortify the port and harbor of N. York.

2. Resolved, that it is expedient to appropriate the further sum of dollars to enable the president of the U. States to fortify the port & harbor of Charleston (S. C.) and the further sum of dollars to enable the president of the U. States to fortify the port and harbor of Norfolk.

3. Resolved, that it is expedient to appropriate the further sum of dollars, to enable the president of the U. States to fortify any ports, other than those of New-York, Charleston and Norfolk, which he may think most conducive to the public welfare.

The speaker said that the first resolution was not in order, as there was a resolution now on the table for the same purpose (submitted some days ago by Mr. Varnum, proposing to appropriate 100,000 dollars for the defence of N. York.

Mr. Varnum withdrew his resolution.

Mr. Dana spoke against making partial appropriations.

Mr. Eppes observed, that the principle of being always prepared for war, had ruined every nation in Europe which had adopted it.—Until the year 1794, the affairs of this nation went on peaceably: at that time this principle had intruded itself into the national councils, and above fifty millions had been expended. Since the year 1798, upwards of 19 millions had been expended on the navy; and what (he asked) was it worth now? Considerable sums he said, had also been expended on fortifications, and what were they good for? He referred particularly to the "famous fortification of Fort M'Henry, at Baltimore." He said he should vote for the first resolution, on account of the anxiety manifested by the people of N. Y. but he would vote against the other two.—He therefore called for a division of the question.

Mr. Quincey also spoke against making specific appropriations in favor of one port to the exclusion of others. He also inquired what had caused the change in the opinion of the gentleman (Mr. Varnum). Formerly that gentleman had been opposed to appropriations for the defence of our harbors. He then adverted to Mr. V's intimacy with the president, and the secretary at war, which (he said) almost rendered that gentleman's opinions semi-official, and wished to know what had produced his sudden regeneration. He had heard it reported, and he mentioned it with regret, that the fortification of New-York was made a party question: he did not know how true this might be, but of this he was certain, that the gentleman's hundred-thousand dollar resolution had been offered a few days after a certain great change had taken place in Albany.

Mr. Varnum replied. He denied that his opinion had ever been influenced by any events at Albany or elsewhere. He also observed, that it was a well known fact, that he had always contributed to the defence of the country whenever he thought it necessary; and had done so, while his colleague was rocking in the cradle.

The first resolution was then referred to the committee of the whole, to whom had been referred a bill on the same subject.

Messrs. D. R. Williams, Madison & Newton, spoke against the other two resolutions, when Mr. Mumford consented to withdraw them.

Mr. Randolph, from the committee of ways and means, presented a bill in addition to the act (passed a few days ago) supplementary to the act making provision for the redemption of the whole of the public debt of the U. States; which was referred to a committee of the whole on Tuesday.

Fort M'Henry (Baltimore) Feb. 16, 1807. The editor of the Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser will please insert the following communication, letters & certificates.

On my arrival at Washington City, which was on the night of the 21st ult. I immediately went to the secretary at war, with my dispatches from gen. Wilkinson (10 o'clock the next day being his hour for business) at the same time disclosed to him what follows in certificates; it seems since that time an application has come on from gen. Wilkinson, for my arrest, and that a certain captain Furgus, of the U. States artillery, has gone forward and made disclosures to gen. Wilkinson, charging me with a connection with col. Burr. Here I must observe, I did at the time of judge Workman's remarks to me, mention the object of capt. Furgus; & I now affirm that gen. Wilkinson was as much known to me in the story as col. Burr, or the U. States: I hope the court that tries me, will be so impartial as to have the entire proceedings published by virtue of their sentence. On the 9th inst. general Dearborn sent for me—I went—he said he wanted an explanation relative to judge Workman on the subject which I had promulgated on my arrival, guarding against a want of candor, by saying he had received depositions against me. I observed, I had said every thing in the first instance. I returned to my lodgings, and the next day about 2 o'clock, carried general Dearborn the following letter, accompanied by a copy of my letter to gen. Wilkinson, written a few days before the troops marched to "wreath themselves in laurels on the Sabine."

Georgetown, February 10, 1807. General Dearborn, Sir, From circumstances, doubts have been created unfavorable to the patriotism and affection which I bear to my country, therefore from respect to you and justice to myself will make a few observations—not wishing in the least to prejudice fair and candid investigation.

When I arrived here, I mentioned to you as correctly as I could, the manner in which judge Workman had deluded me, together with lieutenants Taylor and Sevier; by the bye not apprehending in the least any avowals that might be made.

I acknowledge with frankness, that I mentioned to some officers, directly after leaving judge W's table, what had been disclosed to me, which was to this effect: "we intend marching to Mexico so soon as our plan is sufficiently ripe, headed by col. Burr and gen. Wilkinson; our government knows of our arrangements and aids and assists us." Since then I conceived that the scheme was in oblivion.

W. C. MEAD, Ensign. Second regt. U. S. army.

Nassau's, October 15, 1806. General James Wilkinson, Sir, From the present dubious situation of our army, I presume to make one solicitation, it is, that I may be permitted to remain and do my duty with the army, instead of repairing to New-Orleans as ordered by general orders of the 14th; & that I may be allowed one or two days to deliver over my public papers to lieutenant Buck. I trust my conduct has not been such as to invite a belief, that I wish to secede from those duties which my country claims of me as a soldier, by pleading fiscal arrangements. Love of country ought to be the first and only pride of a soldier—mean selfishness guarded by the unerring sentinel of justice, while patience and her distant relation obede form the "military man."

W. C. MEAD, Ensign. Second reg. U. S. army.

About eight or nine o'clock at night, I received the following notice:

Washington City, February 10th, 1807. Sir,

You will consider yourself under arrest on the following charges, viz.

For mutinous and un-officer like conduct. You will therefore divest yourself of your side-arms and repair to Fort M'Henry, in the harbor of Baltimore, and confine yourself within the walls of that Fort.

I am, sir, Your obedient servant. (Signed) H. BURBECK, colonel Commanding artillery. Ensign William C. Mead, 2d reg. infantry.

[CERTIFICATE.] Fort M'Henry, February 12th, 1807.

"I certify that ensign W. C. Mead, of the 2d regiment of United States' army, did, at the table of judge Workman, of New-Orleans, in reply to his observations relative to marching to Mexico—wherein he asserted that our government fostered the expedition; but that this kind of policy was observed to prevent suspicions from the Spaniards in general—though a number of Spanish officers were in the secret, and that general Wilkinson and col. Burr perfectly understood each other, and were to have command—say (Mead) that he was too much of an American to think of expropriating a measure of that kind, he would glory in the enterprise—further, I do not believe that ensign Mead ever thought any thing of the business, as we never had one single word on the subject, until I arrived at Washington City."

(Signed) G. W. SEVIER, lieutenant. Second regiment infantry.

[CERTIFICATE.] Fort M'Henry, February 12, 1807.

I do certify, on the honor of a soldier, that ensign W. C. Mead, of the second regiment of the United States army, did on his way to Washington City, charged with Samuel Swartwout, as prisoner of the U. States, and acting under the orders of Gen.

Wilkinson, mention to me a certain conversation, which he said took place at Judge Workman's table, in New-Orleans, and I believe to this effect: "That Judge Workman observed to him, lieutenants Taylor and Sevier, that an expedition was on foot, to march to Mexico, under the sanction and knowledge of our government—that general Wilkinson and col. Burr were the conductors of this expedition; and that it was a glorious opportunity for laudable enterprise; that ensign Mead did say Workman had deluded him."

(Signed) N. PINKNEY, Lieutenant of Infantry.

Also mentioned the circumstance to Lieut. William Wilson, at Annapolis, on my way to Washington City with dispatches. Convinced of the evils which characterized our government when the real cause is hidden, and to hint as much as my situation will admit, at the designs and machinations of men experienced in treachery, induces me to make this ingenuous appeal to that primal source, from whence emanated the honor I felt in bearing a commission in the U. States army.

The celebrated fable of the fox and goat, is known to every school boy; and I do not hesitate to say, that it is my firm belief, there are men high in the general confidence, that have taken the ladder from under the feet of their own deluded party.

When I entered the service, it was not to wear a shining epaulette, or to be spangled with gold buttons, nor was it the poor, pitiful sum of twenty dollars per month; it was the pleasing incentive, resulting from the happy idea of being known to my country, and devoting my life to the first passion of my soul. My object is not to solicit favor, or make a partial impression on the mind of any person, but if I have committed mutiny, that my government will make a proper example of me—a lasting monument to future credulists.

"For gold the merchant ploughs the Main, The farmer ploughs the Manor; But glory is the soldier's gain, The soldier's wealth is honor." W. C. MEAD, ensign. Second regiment U. S. army. Fort M'Henry, 16th Feb. 1807.

MESSAGE From the president of the U. S., transmitting a memorial of the French minister, on the subject of the claim of Amelie Eugenie de Beaumarchais, heir and legal representative of the late Baron de Beaumarchais, Feb. 6, 1807, read, and referred to the committee of claims.

To the Senate and House of Representatives. The government of France having examined into the claim of M. De Beaumarchais, against the U. States, and considering it as just and legal, has instructed its minister here to make representations on the subject to the government of the U. S. I now lay his memoir thereon before the legislature, the only authority competent to a final decision on the same.

TH. JEFFERSON. Feb. 6, 1807.

TRANSLATION. To Mr. Madison, Secretary of State.

Sir—I have the honor to address to you enclosed an answer to the objections made by the secretary of the treasury to a complete settlement with the heirs of M. Beaumarchais. This answer is annexed to the note which I have the honor to address to you on this subject.

Accept, sir, a new assurance of my high consideration.

TURREAU, Washington, Jan. 14, 1807. Faithfully translated, JACOB WAGNER, Chief Clerk, Department of State.

TRANSLATION. Note of the Minister Plenipotentiary of France to the Secretary of State.

The undersigned, minister plenipotentiary of his imperial and royal majesty, to his excellency the president of the U. States of America, has the honor to remind the secretary of state, that at the beginning of last year and during the session of congress, M. Chevallé, attorney in fact of the heirs of M. de Beaumarchais, took various steps with the secretary of the treasury to obtain a liquidation of the debt contracted by the U. S. with the said Beaumarchais.

At the request of the attorney in fact, to whom the treasury opposed a receipt of M. de Beaumarchais in order to place to the debt of his heirs a million of livres tournois, the undersigned addressed, on the 1st January 1806, to the secretary of the treasury, an official note, which left no doubt of the destination of the million in dispute, the employment of which, agreeably to the orders of the king, was consecrated to a special and secret service, and consequently, which had not and could not have any connexion with the transactions, bargains, supplies, and generally with any mercantile operations which M. de Beaumarchais might have been concerned in with the government of the U. States of America.

This note, or rather this official declaration of the minister plenipotentiary of France, ought to have removed the only obstacle which was opposed to the entire liquidation with the heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais, because the justice of their claim is demonstrated to conviction; and they were far from expecting that the secretary of the treasury would still retain doubts upon the legitimacy of their credit.

The heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais now confide their interests to the protection of the French government as well as to the justice of the federal government; and the undersigned, in declaring to the secretary of state, that this affair, on being examined in France with the most scrupulous attention, has presented to the judgment of the most enlightened and impartial men nothing but an incontestible conclusion in favor of the heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais, will add, that it is no longer to Mr. Chevallé, it is no longer to a mere attorney in fact, that the said heirs have recourse to obtain a justice too long refused; but to the French government itself, which calls with confidence and through the organ of its minister plenipotentiary, the attention of the secretary of state to interests no less sacred than the cause which produced them.

When the French government raises its voice in favor of the unfortunate heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais, the undersigned thinks

it useless to recall to view the nature and the importance of the services, which their author rendered to the cause of independence. It would be to turn the mind back towards a period equally glorious for the two nations, but that France, always generous, knows how to forget, because the U. States remember it.

After the ministerial declaration respecting the employment of the million, a declaration, which doubtless (and as a consequence of those mutual sentiments of respect and confidence, which governments ought to have for communications of this nature) would have been sufficient for the secretary of the treasury, if his powers had not been so limited; it is the duty of the undersigned, agreeably to the formal and repeated instructions, which he has received in this respect, to address himself directly and in the name of his government to that of the United States, and to request from the secretary of state, that at length justice should be done to the claim of the heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais; a claim which the French government would not have honored with its support, if it were not founded upon the immutable principles of reason and of right.

The undersigned states with eagerness this occasion of offering to the secretary of state the homage of his high consideration.

(Signed) TURREAU, Washington, the 14th Jan. 1807.

Faithfully translated, JACOB WAGNER, Chief clerk, department of state.

TRANSLATION. Claim of Mr. Beaumarchais, to a million against the United States, as payment for supplies which he furnished them.

Objections of the Treasury of the United States.

"It was afterwards discovered that only two millions out of the three granted as a gratuitous gift, before the treaty of February, 1778, had been thus received by the United States; and to an application made to count de Vergennes in 1786, for the purpose of ascertaining when, and to whom, the other million had been paid, an answer was returned that the said million was paid on the 10th day of June, 1776; but a copy of the receipt was refused, and the minister did not think proper to disclose the name of the person, who had received the money, on a subsequent application made to the French government, the minister of foreign relations gave it as the result of his inquiries that M. de Beaumarchais was the person to whom the said million had been advanced, and accordingly furnished the ministers of the United States with a copy of M. de Beaumarchais receipt for that sum."

"No doubt remains, that the advance of one million made by the French government, on the 10th June, 1776, for the use of the United States, and the payment of one million on the same day, by order of the minister of foreign affairs to M. Beaumarchais, were but one and the same transaction."

Answer. Before answering the objections of the treasury of the United States, it is of importance correctly to state the question which forms the subject of the present claim, because by this means all suppositions foreign to it will be avoided.

Did Mr. Beaumarchais receive from the government of France a million on account of his supplies to the United States? This is the question.

The identity of the date given by Mr. de Vergennes, and of the receipt of Mr. de Beaumarchais, communicated by Mr. Buchot, has until now been the cause of a delay of justice on the part of the treasury of the United States, to the heirs of Mr. de Beaumarchais, and of the prejudices which the treasury has conceived against this claim.

In Mr. de Beaumarchais we are to perceive and recognize two characters; one the secret agent of the French government; and the other a furnisher of supplies to the United States.

As secret agent of the government of France, he received a million on the 10th June, 1776. In the same year Mr. de Vergennes, who had caused it to be given to him, and who had imposed upon him the obligation of rendering an account to himself for it, presented that account to the king, who approved of it, and gave a discharge to Mr. de Beaumarchais. If M. Buchot, in communicating this receipt, had intimated at the same time, that in the same file, and annexed to the receipt itself, were the account rendered to the king, and the approbation in the margin signed by the king himself, certainly the treasury would not have pretended a right to charge to the account of supplies by Mr. de Beaumarchais, a million for which he had accounted, and from which he had been discharged by the authority which had given it to him.

As a furnisher of supplies to the United States, he did not receive the said million, and consequently he is a creditor, and will remain a creditor of the United States for this sum, until it is paid to him. Among the nine millions given as a free gift by the king, three were stated by the convention of 1783, as having been before 1778. Of these three the United States had the use of only two; and it is of that which is wanting that they require an account from M. de Beaumarchais.

Although the nine millions in question have been formerly acknowledged to have been received by the convention of 28th February, 1783, signed by the American commissioners and ratified by congress, and although this public act discharges M. de Beaumarchais from all accountability; nevertheless the government of France, in order to fulfil the claims of justice, as well as the desire of the United States to know what has become of this million, causes its minister plenipotentiary to declare:

1st. That the French government has always remained a stranger to all the mercantile transactions of M. de Beaumarchais, with the United States.

2d. That the million given on the 10th of June, 1776, to the said M. de Beaumarchais was for a secret political service, of which the king reserved to himself the knowledge.

3d. That the account of the employment of the said million was presented at the close of 1776 to the king, and approved by him.

4th. That M. de Beaumarchais had been discharged from it by his majesty himself, 6th. And lastly, that the said million was not given on account of his supplies.

This declaration confirms those which have been made on divers occasions by M.