

Debates in Congress.

GUN BOAT BILL.

Mr. Blount observed, that the committee had not inquired whether the creation of force would augment or diminish the national expenses.

Mr. Randolph was sorry that his question had not been answered, as he deemed it important. This was not dumb legislation, but was certainly blind legislation. Instead of having something like a practical history of this armament; instead of having some sensible person, on whom they could lay the blame should it prove, as he feared it would, useless, the legislature were in a state of perfect ignorance on the subject.

If the United States were in a condition different from that he deemed them to be in, might be induced, for the sake of obtaining some account of this kind of machinery, give up his opposition. But this was no time to make ducks and drakes of money. He wished the sinews of war, guns and money, to be procured and to be kept. He was opposed to embarking the whole treasury of the United States in the holds of such frail vessels as gunboats. If the bill passed, it would be an end to all hopes of saving the country put in a respectable state of defence. For that reason he would vote against the bill. He should despise himself if he voted against it from private hatred or party animosity. He wished to see the nation armed with something more durable—with cannon and muskets. He wished to see provisions, not of sugar and salt, but of iron and lead.

His colleague (Mr. Burwell) as one argument in favor of the passage of the bill, had said that the estimates of the secretary of the navy for keeping gunboats in service, were overcharged. That gentleman had not been very long a member of the house, but he had thought that he had been long enough a member to know that estimates were never overcharged; that they almost uniformly fell short of the actual expense. The gentleman had also said, that gunboats had been found useful in Europe. Would the gentleman compare the little basins of Toulon, scooped out of the sand to the large estuaries of the United States? Were our gunboats to be first chained together, and then chained to the land, as had been there done? If so, he was done with them.

A case had all along stared him in the face, and he was astonished that no gentleman had alluded to it. At Algiers, the Spaniards kept a large number of gunboats. No man would contend that the passage through the Gut of Gibraltar was easier than up the Chesapeake. How then did it happen that we never heard of gunboats from Algiers attempting to prevent ships of war from passing through that Strait? Because they were incompetent. This he took to be a strong evidence of the inefficiency of gunboats. He wished to know whether it was intended that these gunboats should protect the mouths of the Hudson and the Chesapeake, or that they should be drawn up to New York, and above Craney Island. If the latter was the intention we did not want them.

He wished to put it in the power of the executive to oblige those vessels that had been ordered off to depart. There was now a case in point. The president had issued his proclamation, commanding all British armed vessels to leave our waters. They refused to go, and 70 gunboats, with even Decatur at their head, could not drive them away. The whole navy of the United States, with 70 gunboats, could not protect us from the invasion of this little detachment of the British navy; and after all this, they were called on for more gunboats. It was something like the physician, in one of the best of Collier's plays, who told his patient to bleed—he did so, and became worse. Repeat the prescription—he repeated it, and died.

He was for making gunboats or block ships of the frigates—they ought to be put in requisition in some way. But in answer to this his colleague might perhaps tell him of the affair at Havana, where 12 sail of the line were taken, notwithstanding they were protected by the strongest fortress in the world—meaning, he supposed, the Moro Castle. There were gunboats at the Havana, and if the argument proved any thing, it proved that forts and gunboats were worth nothing against a naval force. According to that statement, the idea ought to be abandoned. His friend from Virginia would find it as impossible to defend the Chesapeake, below New Point Comfort, with gunboats, as to defend commerce on the Indian ocean.

He recollected the expression of a man, who as a minister he revered above all others, the first William Pitt. When that great man was engaged in a war with all the house of Bourbon, and had gained unparalleled advantages to his nation (but which his successors afterwards lost in negotiation) he had the magnanimity to declare that victory ought not to be attributed to any management of his, but to the fatuity of the foe. France quit the land, where she had the superiority, and plunged into the ocean, where she was soon worsted. France had lately confined herself to the land, her proper element, and was perhaps, at the moment he was speaking, the mistress of Europe. If

this country was able to meet the enemy on her own element, let it be done; but in Heaven's name let the first care be taken of Terra Firma.

The vote which he should give against the bill on the table, he knew would be an ineffectual one. He hoped, however, the experiment would prove successful—that the views of the other gentlemen might prove more correct than his, as he should always rejoice in any thing that redounded to the honor of his country.

Mr. Newton in defence of the gun-boats in our next.

[Debate to be continued.]

LEGISLATURE.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES, MARYLAND.
Wednesday, Dec. 16.

The house met. Present as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read.

The resolution in favour of Thomas Meredith, and the further supplement to an act for erecting a village at Choptank Bridge, in Caroline county, and for other purposes therein mentioned, were sent to the senate.

Mr. J. Williams delivered a bill, entitled, An act for recording certain wills in the register's office of Worcester county, and a bill, entitled, An act authorising and directing the sales of certain lands lying in Worcester county, belonging to William Fleming deceased; which were read.

A petition from John Wilkins, of Somerset county, praying to be released from the additional nine per cent. imposed on him by law, a petition from the Baltimore insurance company, praying to be authorised by law to invest their funds or any part thereof in shares of any chartered bank, in road stock, or in any other fund or stock, and a petition from the commissioners appointed by the act for establishing pilots, praying they may have authority to obtain evidence when holding court, and to be compensated for their services, were preferred, read, and referred.

Leave given to bring in a bill to alter, change and abolish, all such parts of the constitution and form of government as relate to the time of the meeting of the general assembly, and for other purposes.

The bill authorising Robert Leatherbury, of Somerset county, to complete his collection, was read the second time and passed.

On motion, the house resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the bill to regulate and discipline the militia of this state; Mr. Shaaf in the chair. After sometime spent therein the speaker resumed the chair, and Mr. Shaaf reported, that the committee had taken into consideration the subject matter referred to them, but not having time to go through the same, had directed him to move for leave to sit again.

The question was then put, that the committee have leave to sit again? Resolved in the affirmative.

The house adjourned till to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, December 17.

The house met. Present as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read.—The speaker appeared in the house and resumed the chair.

The bill authorising Robert Leatherbury, of Somerset county, to complete his collection, was sent to the senate.

A petition from Nolley Maddox, of Prince George's county, praying to be compensated for certain services rendered as sheriff and petition from sundry inhabitants of Cecil county, praying that Zenas Wells may be compensated for building a bridge over Principio creek, were preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. T. Dorsey delivered a bill, entitled, A further supplement to an act, entitled, An act to incorporate an insurance company in Baltimore town; which was read.

Mr. Briscoe delivered a favourable report on the petition of George P. Hinkle; which was read.

The bill to extend further the power of the levy court of Allegany county, relative to roads in said county, and for other purposes, was read the second time, passed, and sent to the senate.

Mr. Little delivered a bill entitled, An act to change the place of holding the election in the first district of Baltimore county; which was read.

Petitions from Nathaniel Oldham & Absalom Oldham, of Cecil county, praying a further time to complete their collections, a petition from Mary G. Handy, and others, of the city of Washington, praying they may be authorised to sell the real estate of their father, Isaac Handy, lying in Somerset county, and a petition from Joshua Howard of Frederick county, praying for a road, were preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. T. Dorsey delivered a bill, entitled, A supplement to an act, entitled, An act for founding a college in the city or precincts of Baltimore, by the name of Baltimore college; which was read.

Mr. W. H. Brown delivered a bill, entitled, An act for the relief of Martin Brown, an insolvent debtor of Saint-Mary's county; which was read.

On the second reading of the bill for opening and extending Pratt-street in the city of Baltimore, the question was put, That the further consideration of the same be referred to the 10th day of November next? Resolved in the affirmative, yeas 39, nays 27.

On motion, that the journal of the 4th of December be corrected, ordered, That Mr. Winder, Mr. Shaaf and Mr. Hall, be a committee to examine the propriety and most proper mode of doing the same.

The clerk of the senate delivered a letter from the president of the United States, enclosing an address to the legislature of this state.

Ordered, That the same be placed on the

journal at length. Also the bill to establish a public road in Prince-George's county, from Lansdale's Branch to intersect a road leading to Oyster-shell Landing, on Patuxent river, endorsed, "will pass." Ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. Jackson delivered a favourable report on the petition of John Wilkins; which was read.

A petition from John McCandless, of Harford county, praying a divorce, was preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. Shaaf delivered the bill to incorporate a fire insurance company in the city of Baltimore as amended; which was read.

On motion, the house resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the bill to regulate and discipline the militia of this state; Mr. Shaaf in the chair. After sometime spent therein, the speaker resumed the chair, and Mr. Shaaf reported, that the committee had taken into consideration the subject matter referred to them, but not having time to go through the same, had directed him to move for leave to sit again.

The question was then put, That the committee have leave to sit again? Resolved in the affirmative.

The house adjourns till to-morrow morning.

FRIDAY, December 18.

The house met. Present as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read. Mr. Hopewell appeared in the house.

Mr. T. Dorsey delivered a bill, entitled, an act to quiet the possessions and fix the lines of the lots of ground fronting on the west side of Philip-street, between Willis-street and Thames-street, in the city of Baltimore; which was read.

A petition from Mary Bescke, of the city of Baltimore, praying a divorce, was preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. Street delivered a bill, entitled, a further supplement to an act, entitled, an act to alter the mode of collecting the county tax in Harford county; which was read.

Mr. Stevens delivered a favourable report on the petition of William Rose, and others; which was read.

A petition from Sarah McCandless, counter to the petition of John McCandless, a petition from sundry inhabitants of Baltimore county, praying a certain road may be straightened, and a petition from sundry inhabitants of the eastern precincts of the city of Baltimore, praying a lottery for the purpose of building an evening market-house, was preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. Hall delivered a bill, entitled, an act to encourage the destruction of crows in the several counties therein mentioned; which was read.

A petition from Buckler Bond, of Harford county, praying he may be compensated for building a bridge across Winter's Run, and a petition from the proprietors, and others interested in fisheries on the river Susquehanna, stating that they suffer much damage by persons navigating boats through their seins, and coming to anchor in their fishing grounds, and praying remedy thereof, were preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. T. Dorsey delivered a bill, entitled, an act authorising the Baltimore and Frederick-town turnpike road company to erect a toll-bridge over the M-racey river, a bill, entitled, A further additional supplement to the act, entitled, an act for amending, and reducing into system, the laws and regulations concerning last wills and testaments, the duties of executors, administrators and guardians, and the rights of orphans and other representatives of deceased persons, and a bill, entitled, an act for the relief of Nathaniel L. Chew, Peter Miles and Robert Nesbit, of Baltimore county; which were read.

Mr. Callis delivers an unfavourable report on the petition of Mary Bescke; which was twice read and concurred with.

A petition from James Cockran, collector of Cecil county, praying a further time to complete his collection, was preferred, read, and referred.

Mr. Stuart delivered a bill, entitled, an act authorising the drawing a lottery to defray the expense of building a masonic hall in the city of Baltimore; which was read.

The bill authorising and directing the sale of certain lands in Worcester county, and belonging to William Fleming, deceased, was read the second time, and passed.

A petition from sundry inhabitants of Bridge-street, in the precincts of Baltimore, praying that a certain brick-house may be condemned, was preferred, read, and referred.

The clerk of the senate delivered the bill for founding a medical college in the city or precincts of Baltimore for the instruction of students in the different branches of medicine, endorsed, "will pass with the proposed amendments;" which amendments were agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed.

Also the resolution in favour of Thomas Meredith, endorsed, "assented to."—The resolutions in favour of Catharine Johnson, John Maloy, Eliza Hopkins and John Barnes, severally endorsed, "disseminated from." And the following message:

We have rejected your resolution, proposing to levy on the inhabitants of Charles county, a sum of money sufficient to pay for transcribing certain records therein mentioned, not because we are opposed to the object of the resolution, but because we deem the mode of effecting that object novel and inexpedient in legislation.

We are of opinion that resolutions ought to be employed only to express facts and principles, and the opinions and purposes of the legislature, but cannot for a moment conceive, that the most valuable rights of our citizens were ever intended by the constitution to be affected, by a mode of proceeding which might be hidden from their view and never be heard of by those on whom it was to operate, until they felt its effects.

Other weighty objections might be offered to levying taxes on the people by way of resolution, but we presume they are unnecessary, and hope you will concur with us in opinion on this subject, and send us a bill embracing the object of the resolution.

Which was read.

Ordered, That the bill to provide for the discharge of insolvent debtors in Baltimore county, be recommitted for amendment.

Ordered, That the second reading of the report on the memorial of Jeremiah T. Chase, chief judge of the third judicial district, be postponed until Thursday next.

On motion, the question was put, That the resolution reserving money for county schools now have a second reading? Determined in the negative, yeas 15, nays 51.

Ordered, that the same have a second reading on Tuesday next.

On motion, the house resolved itself into a committee of the whole, on the bill to regulate and discipline the militia of this state; Mr. Shaaf in the chair. After sometime spent therein the speaker resumed the chair, and Mr. Shaaf reported the said bill, with amendments.

The house adjourns till to-morrow morning.

SALEM, Oct. 25.

Arrived, sch'r Eliza, Meager, 34 days from Surinam. Left, ship Commerce, Baker, Portland; —, Newhall, Newburyport; brig Hibernia, Thornton, Baltimore; Boston Packet, Florence, Salem, in a few days. Sch'r Union, Yell, of Salem, sailed in company.

Ship Mary Ann, E. Norris, from Calcutta, via New-York.

Sch'r Two Brothers, Goodhue, from Senegal. Capt. unfortunately lost all his foremost hands by sickness, viz. Benjamin Miller, Robert Waters, —, Duvall, and —, More.

A brig was coming last evening, supposed to be captain Tucker, from Havana.

BOSTON, December 27.

Arrived, schooner Agnes, Anthony, N. Orleans, 30 days. Balize, 18. cotton, &c. Left, in the river, brig Elizabeth and Emma, from Jamaica for Philadelphia, 89 days out, in distress; a ship said to be the Baltic, Orr, from Liverpool, out 119 days. Left at N. Orleans, ship Mary Adams, of Newburyport, out 84 days from Boston, 48 to the Balize; sch'r Minerva, Waitis, from do 90; brig Edward and Charles, Fitzgerald of Bath, 89 days from Bordeaux. Spoke, December 14, lat. 40 30, off Long Island, brig Vancouver, Crandon, of New Bedford, from Glasgow, for N. York, 34 days out.

Brig Joseph, Turner, St. Domingo, 40 days via the Vineyard, mahogany, coffee and beswax. Left at the Vineyard, ship America, Stickney, of Newburyport, from Baltimore, for Boston. Spoke, November 23, lat. 50, long. 69, 68, brig Thomas Jefferson, of Salem, from Grenada, 28 days out.

Schr. William, Frith, of Hallowell, Havana, 25 days.

Tril Dyer, Richmond.

It is supposed Mr. Bowdoin is not coming immediately home, but intends to pass a few months in England. It is uncertain whether he has been successful in his mission; but a Spanish commissioner, we believe, met him at Paris.

The frigate, with the British envoy on board, sailed on the 9th of November, but put back on account of contrary winds, and sailed again on the 12th, according to the information of captain Dwyer. It is probable she has touched at Halifax to land dispatches.

We understand that an English school of war of 20 guns, was cast away on Wednesday evening last, on the back of Long Island—the captain and two others drowned.

[Warren, R. i. pop.]

NEW YORK, December 25.

Arrived, ship Le Roy, Gillies, 60 days from Tonnigen, and 40 from the Downs, German linens and glass ware. Sailed from Tonnigen, October 23, in co. with ships Anna-Maria, Howland, for New-York; Atlantic, Bennett; General Eaton, Bowles, and Herald, Sandborn, for Philadelphia; Aboua, Williams; and Amity, Sampson, for Baltimore; Caroline, Bram, for New-Orleans; Ulysses, Symonds, for Bordeaux; Perseverance, Atkins, Lisbon; and Alexander and Sally, Swain, of Newburyport; and Harriet, Harlow, for London; Mars, Miles, St. Ubes; Concord, Tripp, Kennebunk; Sally, Leighton, Portsmouth, N. H.; Nancy, Bartow, for Tennessee. The ship Wm. Penn, Small, of Norfolk, got on shore coming down the river Eder, 2 days before the Le Roy sailed, and had not got off. Left in the Eder, brig Catharine, Tubbs, for Philadelphia, in 2 days; ship Eleonora, Taylor, of Providence, for Baltimore, uncertain; Passenger, Coppinger, New-York, do.; Friendship, Pascal, Baltimore, do.; Missouri, Dunlap; and Preservation, Fisher, from Liverpool, Eng. loaded with sugar, not allowed to discharge; Stork, Higgins, to Boston, uncertain. Brig Mountaineer, Gaylord, of New-York, was cast away 18th of Sept. coming out of the Eder, and totally lost. Off the Texel, Sept. 26, spoke brig William, of Portland, from Bordeaux, for Tonnigen. The brig Alexander and Sally, Swain, was off Dover Nov. 1, with loss of anchors and cable. Ship Pocahontas, from Virginia, past the Downs Nov. 1, R. London, had been captured by the British. Ship General Eaton, Bowles, from Tonnigen, for Philadelphia, was detained Nov. 3, and sent into Portsmouth. Ship Cato, from New-York, for Hull, passed the Downs Nov. 9. Ship Ulysses, Symonds, was driven on shore in the Downs, in a gale Nov. 11, and totally lost. The ship Herald, Bartlett, Plymouth, N. S. from Vera-Cruz, for London, arrived in the Downs Nov. 1. Nov. 18, lat. 46, 40, long. 13, spoke ship Amity, Sampson, for Baltimore. 23d, lat. 41, 35, long. 30, spoke the British bt. Countess of Darlington, Moore, from Charleston, for Plymouth, Eng. very leaky and short of provisions and water, supplied her. 30th, spoke brig Venus, of Marblehead, 9 days from Boston for Leghorn.

British Packet, Norton, capt. Mather, 43 days from Falmouth and 13 days from Bermuda, the November Mail. Sailed from the former 11th Nov. Dec. 11, lat. 32, 10, long. 62, spoke a sch'r. 10 days from N. Haven for Barbadoes.

Ship Marietta, Olcott, 22 days from Point Petre, Guadaloupe, sugar, coffee and cotton, to Ferguson and Day. Left brig Hetty, Cutter for Portland in 15 days; ship Northern Liberties, Clough, and brig St. Tammany, Blagge, for New-York, uncertain; sch'r Antelope, Lee, in 2 days; brig Batsey, Motley, for N. York in 10; brig