

of the committee of war department, before them for some weeks past.

Mr. Leib replied that he was aware that the subject was generally before the committee of ways and means; but the house had been in session four months without any report being made on it. His object was that the resolution should be passed as an instruction to the committee to pay a particular and early attention to the subject.

Mr. Nicholson moved to amend the motion by adding to it, "and the office of the accountant of the war department." His reason for this motion was that a bill to that effect was introduced into the house two years ago. Mr. N. added that he was of the opinion, that an infinitely better arrangement would be made at the treasury if these offices were abolished than if they were retained.

Dr. Leib acquiesced in the amendment, and the resolution was then agreed to.

The bill making provision for the application of the money heretofore appropriated to the laying out and making public roads leading from the navigable waters emptying into the Atlantic to the Ohio river, was read the third time and passed.

Thursday, Feb. 16.

Mr. J. Randolph from the committee of ways and means reported a bill laying a duty of ten dollars upon every slave imported into the United States.

Mr. J. Randolph moved that it be made the order of the day for to-morrow.

Dr. Leib moved that it be made the order for a more distant day.

When an adjournment was called for, and carried without any question being put on the previous motion.

Friday, Feb. 17.

Bills were reported more effectually to secure the independence of the judges of the courts in the United States; and for making further provision for extinguishing debts due from the United States. Referred.

On motion of Mr. Dana, the committee of Commerce and Manufactures were instructed to enquire into the expediency of amending the several acts fixing the compensation of officers of the customs.

A message was received from the President of the United States, giving information respecting the situation of the lands of the United States in the vicinity of Detroit. Referred.

Mr. Nicholson reported a bill supplementary to the act providing for a navy peace establishment. The bill provides for the appointment of sundry agents to superintend the ships laid up in ordinary. Referred.

Mr. Nicholson made a report on the petition of — Marsteller, &c. praying for divorces. The report states that the committee had not thought it necessary to enquire into the merits of the individual cases, under the conviction that a general power to grant divorces should be vested in some tribunal. For this purpose the report concludes with a resolution to invest the circuit courts with power to allow divorces. Resolution agreed to. Ayes 75, and referred to a select committee to bring in a bill.

The house resumed the consideration of the unfinished business of yesterday, viz. "what day should be made the order for the committee of the whole to consider the bill laying a tax of ten dollars upon every slave imported into the United States," when after a considerable debate, and motions made and lost, by a vote 56 to 50, it was postponed to the 2d Monday in March.

Saturday, Feb. 18.

Mr. Eppes offered the following resolution: Resolved, That a committee be appointed to enquire whether the monies drawn from the treasury of the United States on account of the marine corps from the year '98 to the end of the year 1802 have been faithfully applied to the public service in conformity to existing laws, which was immediately taken up, agreed to, and referred to Messrs. Eppes, Sands, McCreery, Leib and Boyle.

On motion of Mr. Leib, the committee of ways and means were instructed to enquire into the expediency of abolishing the office of Lieut. Colonel Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Mr. Moore offered a resolution instructing the committee of Commerce and Manufactures to enquire into the expediency of authorising the President of the United States to employ persons to explore such parts of the province of Louisiana, as he may think proper, and report their opinion thereupon to the house. Mr. Moore said it was scarcely necessary to make any remarks on the subject of this resolution. The government was not in possession of a good geographical description of Louisiana which it was very desirable that it should possess, inasmuch as its limits were not completely designated in the articles of cession; and as the time might not, perhaps, be distant, when its boundaries may be a subject of negotiation between the former owners of the province and the United States.

The resolution was agreed to—Ayes 53.

Dr. Mitchell from the committee of Commerce and Manufactures, made a report on the subject of laying duties for the support of Light Houses. The report is accompanied with several documents, and concludes with a resolution that a duty of 40 cents a ton be laid on foreign vessels entering the ports of the United States for the support of Light Houses.

The house took up the report of the committee of the whole on the bill making provision for persons disabled by known wounds received during the revolutionary war. After several amendments being made the further consideration was postponed to Tuesday next.

Monday, Feb. 20.

A bill for erecting Louisiana into two territories, and making provision for the temporary government thereof, was received from the Senate, and referred.

Mr. J. Randolph said the house would recollect that he had on a former day offered a resolution on barring any claims derived under any act of the state of Georgia passed in the year '95, in relation to lands ceded to the United States. It was not his purpose in rising at this time to trespass on the patience of the house—nor did he know in future that he should offer any remarks additional to those he had already made. But he conceived it his duty to place the subject in such a point of light that every eye, however dim, might distinctly see its true merits. For this purpose he withdrew the resolution which he had before offered, and moved a more particular one, which was agreed to and referred.

Mr. Leib reported a bill to repeal the act fixing the rank and pay of the commanding officer of the corps of marines.

The house went into a committee of the whole, Mr. Varnum in the chair, on the report of a select committee on the bill from the Senate, to divide the Indiana territory into two separate governments. The report, for reasons assigned, recommends a rejection of the bill.

The question being put on agreeing to the report, it passed in the negative—Yeas 34.

When the bill from the Senate, was read and so amended as to designate the new territory by the name of Michigan, instead of North Western territory; and the committee rose and reported the bill.

Mr. Thomas from the joint committee of the two houses, made a report specifying the business, in their opinion, necessary to be transacted the present session, and concluding, with a resolution that it be closed the 12th of March. Its consideration postponed till Friday.

Dr. Mitchell reported a bill to provide for light houses, and buoys, &c. Referred.

Tuesday, Feb. 21.

A bill to authorise the courts of the United States to appoint commissioners to take depositions of witnesses out of court, &c. was read the third time and passed.

A bill to divide the Indiana territory into two separate governments was read the second time.

A motion was made by Mr. Holland to postpone the consideration to a distant day, which being negatived; the bill was put on its passage and lost 59 to 58. The house went into a committee of the whole on the bill making appropriations for the support of government which was gone through.

NORFOLK, February 25.

Deplorable and Distressing FIRE!

ON Wednesday night, about eleven o'clock, the inhabitants were roused from their beds with the repeated cry of FIRE! which was perceived issuing from the ware house of Mr. Dunlap, on Maxwell's wharf, and which raged and spread with such fury, that the only exertions which could be made by the activity of the citizens to arrest its progress, was the blowing up of several houses, or it is probable not a house in the Borough would have escaped destruction. It has laid waste the most commercial part of the town, having totally destroyed every building on Campbell's wharf, Maxwell's, Marsden's, Rothery's, Commerce Street, Warren's and Woodside's wharves, and progressed up the Market Square to the Main Street, and continued its ravages along the Main Street to Mr. Whitehead's new building, reducing every house in Wide and Little Water Streets. Were it not for the exertions of a few who manfully resisted the flames, and prevented Mr. Taylor's ware house adjoining Woodside's wharf from taking fire, the whole of the valuable buildings on Town Point must have been laid waste.

Some lives were lost, and many persons badly wounded by the blowing up of the houses. The market-house was partly cut down, which prevented a communication of the flames to the North side of the Main Street, which luckily escaped. Upwards of 250 houses are totally destroyed, and the estimate of general loss, on a moderate calculation, supposed to exceed one million of dollars. Numbers of lighters owing to their being overloaded, and the tide being remarkably low, were burnt in the docks. Several vessels at the wharves took fire, and some in this fire drifted to Portsmouth, when it communicated and destroyed some others—indeed at one period it appeared as if Portsmouth was on fire.

The raging of the flames, the columns of smoke, the blowing up of houses, the rainy night, the property exposed for safety in the streets, the cries of those who were seated by their little property sheltered only by the canopy of heaven—the ships on fire drifting in the harbour, together with the probability of the whole town being destroyed, exhibited altogether to the senses and to the eye, an awful and dreadful picture. Thousands must have been deprived of a resting place, as it was the most populous part of the Borough. What adds to the above melancholy narrative, is that a poor and very feverish child came on before many an unfortunate family could find shelter for their wearied limbs. We are happy to learn that the Corporation have allotted money for the immediate relief of the needy sufferers, who will receive assistance on application at the office of John Nivison, Esq. Handbills to this effect appearing in different parts of the town; those happy beings therefore, whom Providence has blessed with affliction, have now a fine opportunity to exhibit their benevolence, by adding their liberality to that of the Corporate Body; and we have no doubt but the same will be cheerfully received at the above office, and with equal satisfaction distributed.

A statement of the Houses burnt down.

Maxwell's wharf	13
Campbell's do.	9
Rothery's do.	18
Marsden's do.	5
Commerce street do.	49
Woodside's do. both sides	17
Warren's do.	6
South side of Wide Water street, from Campbell's w. to Commerce-st.	12
North side of Wide Water-st. from Market w. to Commerce st.	30
South and North side of Wide Water-street to Warren's wharf	17
Commerce-street, from Wide Water street up to Main street	14

Narrow Water street, from Market square to Commerce street	40
Narrow Water street, from Commerce street towards the Exchange Coffee-House	14
From Narrow Water street, on the west side of Market square to Main street	12
From the corner of Market square on the south side of Main street to Commerce street	14
Gow's Alley and Lanes back	11
Rothery's Lane	12

Total 260

By as accurate a statement as can at present be made, the value of houses alone destroyed is estimated at 250,000 dollars.

Vessels Destroyed.

Ship Jackson, of Plymouth, Massachusetts. A French Brig, name unknown. Brig Eliza, (coppered) of Charleston. A British Sloop. Two schooners laden with Flour.

It is to be hoped that the conflagration, of which we have this day given an account was accidental; yet from some alarming circumstances that have since occurred, it is much to be apprehended that some vile incendiaries contemplated the total destruction of this town; but we trust the vigilance and activity of the Magistracy will be such, as to discover it. This observation is produced by the attempt made at 11 o'clock last night, to set on fire the stable of Dr. James Taylor—the chump of fire was placed at the sill of the door, and had burnt through and communicated to some out straw, but was providentially discovered by the watchmen in time to prevent its progress—several of the weather boards were burnt through and part of the floor, and had it not been arrested, as the wind was, the east end of the town must have become a bonfire.

PETERSBURG, March 2.

It always give us pleasure to record instances of disinterested benevolence. The late destructive fire at Norfolk, has been the means of drawing forth that distinguished virtue in an eminent degree in this town. To relieve the distresses of our unfortunate fellow-citizens of that borough, a subscription was opened in this place on Tuesday last, and by the evening following, near 2000 dollars were subscribed, a part of which, we are informed, was forwarded on Wednesday by the mail. There cannot be a doubt, but that other towns in this and our sister states, will imitate so praise-worthy an example.

RICHMOND, March 5.

It gives us great pleasure to observe, that in the course of a few hours only, upwards of 3,000 dollars were subscribed by the inhabitants of this city and Manchester, and immediately transmitted to our distressed fellow-citizens of Norfolk.

WASHINGTON CITY, March 1.

REPUBLICAN NOMINATIONS, OF PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT.

At a meeting of one hundred and ten Republican members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, held at the Capitol in Washington, on the evening of the 25th of February, 1804.

STEPHEN J. BRADLEY, of the Senate, was unanimously called to the chair.

After a very able discussion of the importance of selecting the most proper characters for the next presidential election,

THOMAS JEFFERSON, was unanimously nominated for the next PRESIDENT—and the ballots being taken, GEORGE CLINTON, governor of New York, was by a very large majority, nominated for the next VICE-PRESIDENT.

A respectable committee consisting of a member from each state, was appointed to make proper arrangements.

WILMINGTON, N. C.

TUESDAY, MARCH 13, 1804.

MARRIED—On Sunday evening last, Mr. ROBERT DORSEY to Miss ANN WARD. Mr. ALLEN APOEN to Miss SUSAN WILLIAMS, and Mr. SAMUEL LANE to Mrs. DYCE PARRISH.

We hear with regret, that by reason of bad health, Alfred Moore, Esq. of this state, has been induced to resign his office of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. We lament that the community are to be deprived of the future service of so able, independent and upright a Judge. [Ral. Reg.]

The following States have ratified the amendment to the Constitution of the United States, proposed by Congress, to wit—New-York, Vermont, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, Kentucky, and Ohio.—The States of Massachusetts and Delaware have rejected it.

It is said that Charles C. Pinckney and Rufus King, will be the federal candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States.

The legislature of New-Jersey, on the 15th ult. passed a law for the gradual abolition of slavery. It enacts that every child born of a slave after the 4th day of July next shall be free, but shall remain the servant of the owner of the mother, in the same manner as if such child had been bound to service by the overseers of the poor; males until the age of 25, and females until the age of 21.

On the 10th ult. that immense pile, the New-York Theatre, was brought under the hammer and struck off to J. C. Shaw, Esq. for 45,000 dollars.

The City Council of Charleston have resolved to raise a fund by subscription for the relief of the French Emigrants from the West-Indies, who have lately arrived there in distress.

It appears by recent accounts from Louisiana, that fraudulent surveys and sales, are making of large tracts of lands in that country by Spanish officers who set up claims to it which they have, in fact, no foundation.

A fire has lately taken place at the village of Utica, in the State of New-York, which destroyed property to the amount of 15,000 dollars; and another at New-Haven which has been equally serious.

A dwelling-house in the city of Hudson, N. Y. the property of Joseph Clark, was lately consumed by fire, together with a considerable part of the household furniture.—A Forge and Anchor shop in Willsborough was also burnt down. Two men lost their lives by this fatal accident.

The dwelling-house of Col. George Ruffin, in Prince-George county, (Vir.) was consumed by fire on the 3d inst. with some valuable household furniture.

Several attempts have lately been made to set fire to the city of Charleston, and the town of Petersburg.

The following distressing account of the loss of the brig Harriot, of New-York, was received by the editor of the Baltimore Telegraph, through the medium of the post-office, for publication:

New-York, Jan. 24, 1804.

"On the 5th inst. the brig Harriot left this city for Baltimore, and on the 15th we received the intelligence of her loss. On board of her were 30 passengers for Baltimore, all of whom were lost. She was observed by the sch'r Hope, but the storm being so violent she could yield her no assistance."

FOREIGN.—The ship Aurora arrived lately at Halifax, N. S. in 29 days from Greenock. She arrived there in the evening, and landed the captain and one of the passengers; in the mean-while a severe gale of wind came on, and the vessel was drove to sea. The captain informed that when he left Greenock (which was the latter end of December) the Invasion of England had not been attempted, nor had any political event of consequence taken place in Europe during the month.

The twelve Judges of England assembled in the Exchequer Chamber, London, on Saturday the 19th November, to hear arguments in support of the objections taken by counsel in the case of Robert Astlett, who had been convicted of embezzling the property of the bank of England. The point of discussion was, whether the Exchequer bills stolen, being invalid in themselves, could be considered as securities and effects of the bank of England within the statute of the 15th of George II. The point was most luminously argued by Mr. Erskine and Mr. Garrow, but their Lordships' judgment stands over.

Vice-Admiral Lord Nelson, commander in chief of the British squadron in the Mediterranean, has declared the ports of Genoa and Spezzia in a state of blockade—and given notice that all neutral vessels attempting to enter those ports, or found on the coast between Leghorn and Cape Delle Melle, will be stopped by his Majesty's squadron, and sent in for adjudication.

The following interesting article is taken from New-Providence papers received at Philadelphia.

BAHAMA ISLANDS.

An act for encouraging the importation of Corn.—Whereas, it now appears that the last crop of corn, was in general failed throughout these Islands; and as it is therefore expedient to grant encouragement for the importation of that article: May it please your Majesty that it may be enacted by his excellency John Halkett, Esq. Captain General and Governor in Chief, the Council and Assembly of your Majesty's Bahama Islands, that all Corn or Maize in any quantity not less than five hundred bushels, which shall be imported into these Islands from ports or places without the limits of the same between the 10th of February and 31st day of December next, shall be admitted free of the payment of any duty whatever, any thing contained in any act passed in the present session, or in any former session of the General Assembly notwithstanding.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that it shall and may be lawful for any merchant or other person, at any time within the period abovementioned, to ship and export any Salt, the produce of these Islands, free of any duty imposed by any act passed in this present session, or in any former session of the General Assembly, in any ship or vessel in which any such quantity of Corn or Maize shall in her, then voyage have been so imported.

Passed the House of Assembly, January 10, 1804.

J. WESTER, Speaker.

Passed the Council, the 14th January, 1804.

ADAM CHRYSTIE, P.

Assented to, the 12th of January, 1804.

J. HALKETT.

Extract of a letter from an American gentleman at the Havana, to his friend in Baltimore, dated January 19, 1804.

"An express boat from Jamaica is just arrived with the following information.

"The Spanish King's packet for October, called the Urquijo, having left at Porto-Rico the mail for that place, sailed from thence on