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### CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

#### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

January 24.

On motion of Mr. Venable, the unfinished business of yesterday was postponed, in order to take up the report of the committee of elections, on the election of Joseph Bradley Varnum, which was, as we have before stated, in favour of the sitting member. It also stated not only that his conduct had been fair and regular throughout the whole business, but that the object of the petitioners was rather the effect of malevolence than a wish of promoting the public good.

Mr. Coit moved to strike out the words printed in Italics. He doubted the propriety of the house passing a censure of the kind proposed upon the petitioners, and those who supported them.

This motion caused a debate which occupied the remainder of this day's sitting, which as it was in some degree of a private and local nature, will not be given in detail.

The motion to strike out the words in question, was supported by the mover, Messrs. Thatcher, Bradbury, Sitgreaves, Craik, N. Smith, Cooper, Murray, Sewall, Harper, D. Foster, and Williams; and opposed by Messrs. Venable, Swanwick, W. Lyman, Nicholas, Dearborn, Rutherford, Baldwin, Christie, Holland, Madison, and Brent.

The principal ground upon which the motion was supported was, that the committee of election had no business to scrutinize the motives of petitioners; that their motives had nothing to do with the legality or illegality of elections; that they ought to report that a petition had foundation, or it had not; that that house had no right to take upon them to judge upon motives and characters. It was said, on the other hand, that the charges in the petition were so notoriously false and malicious as to call for some other notice than barely to say they were unfounded, and that it was necessary to put a check upon such outrageous attacks upon members of that house, by some such notice as was reported, in order to prevent them in future.

The yeas and nays were called for upon this question, and all the papers relative to the business were read. This took place towards the conclusion of the business, and it was concluded that four different motions were made and negatived for adjournment.

At length Mr. Coit offered a substitute for his former motion, viz. to strike out the words in Italics, in order to insert these words, "that the conduct of the sitting member has been fair and honourable throughout the whole transaction."—This motion was put and carried by yeas and nays, 44 to 28.

A message was received from the senate, informing the house, that they had disagreed to the amendment in the bill for enforcing the laws of the United States in the state of Tennessee.

The house, on motion of Mr. Dent, resolved itself into a committee of the whole on the bill for regulation of pilots within the bay and river Chesapeake, Mr. Muhlenberg in the chair; when,

Mr. Swanwick briefly stated the intention and operation of this bill, which was to give equal privileges to Virginia and Maryland pilots, with respect to bringing in vessels into the Chesapeake.—This application was founded on this circumstance, viz. that Maryland pilots went out farther to sea than Virginia pilots, to meet vessels, and were frequently called on to pilot vessels belonging to Virginia, but not being allowed any thing for this pilotage, the Virginia pilots taking possession of any vessels brought in by such a Maryland pilot into the Chesapeake, and receiving all the advantages of the pilotage. This practice had consequently had this effect, Maryland pilots, though vessels were in the greatest distress, would not come on board, so that many had been lost, for want of pilots, as the Virginia pilots scarcely ever went out to sea. The bill went to direct the board of pilots to grant licences on equal terms to Maryland and Virginia pilots.

Mr. Parker confirmed this statement.

Mr. Coit objected to the principle, from doubts whether they had a right to direct the affairs of a state government to do certain acts.

Mr. S. Smith thought these officers might be directed to grant licences to these pilots on the same ground that the judges and justices of states are directed to do the business of the United States.

Mr. Nicholas thought the duty might as well be done, not by directing the officers to perform the duty, but by permitting them to do it. He thought this mode would steer clear of the objection.

January 21. Mr. Henderson proposed a resolution to the house to the following effect, viz.  
"Resolved, that an additional duty of

cents per gallon, be laid upon all beer, ale, and porter, imported in casks.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per dozen bottles be laid upon all ale, beer and porter imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per pair, be laid on all boots imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per pair be laid on all men's shoes and slippers; also on women's link shoes and upon all other shoes; also upon children's shoes imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid upon all fouchong and black tea imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. on all hyson, imperial and gun-powder tea, and on all other green teas imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ per cwt. be laid on all unmanufactured steel imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ per cwt. be laid on all bar iron imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all nails imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ per lb. be laid on all glauber salts imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all manufactured tobacco imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all snuff imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all Cocoa imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all chocolate imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid upon all pepper imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all pimento imported.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all chocolate manufactured within the United States.

"That an additional duty of \_\_\_\_\_ cents per lb. be laid on all snuff manufactured within the United States."

Mr. Henderson wished these resolutions to be referred to the committee of the whole, to whom was referred the resolution of the gentleman of S. Carolina (Mr. Harper) and the report of the committee of ways and means on the subject of indirect taxes.

A considerable debate took place on the subject of this reference.

The question for a reference was at length put, and carried, there being 51 votes in favour of it.

A message was received from the senate, informing the house, that the President had approved and signed an act for enforcing the laws of the U. States in the state of Tennessee.

Also, that they had appointed a joint committee, viz. Messrs. Sedgwick, Laurence and Read, to act in conjunction with a committee to be appointed by the House of Representatives, to ascertain and fix the mode of examining the votes of the electors for President and Vice-President of the U. States, &c. and to regulate the time and manner of administering the oaths of office to the President and Vice-President of the United States.

On the subject of appropriations for 1797, the House of Representatives display great zeal to economize the public expenditures. They have expunged the item for messenger and office-keeper to the treasurer of the United States—and that of clerk to the purveyor of the treasury. The salary of the office-keepers and messengers is reduced from 300 dollars to 250.

On motion of Mr. Gallatin, the form of the resolution making appropriations was altered. Formerly it ran thus: "Resolved that for the military department, there be appropriated a sum not exceeding \_\_\_\_\_." Under this form of appropriation, the officers of the treasury have held it legal to apply money appropriated to a department generally, to any particular object of that department. For instance, if the estimate for clothing the troops fell short, and a surplus remained in the hospital department, that surplus has been applied to make up the deficiency of the estimate for clothing.

Mr. Gallatin wished this license to be abridged, and the application of money confined strictly to the appropriation for each object. He offered to amend the resolution by substituting these words,

"That the following sums be respectively appropriated"—which was carried—though it was objected that this limitation might stop the wheels of government, in certain cases.

In debate on the appropriation for the military and naval establishments, Mr. Gallatin moved to strike out the word *naval*. His reason was, that the house had not determined on finishing the frigates, and he wished that principle to be first settled.

On this point considerable debate took place.—The motion was opposed by Mr. Parker, Mr. Swanwick, Mr. Coit, Mr. Murray, Mr. J. Smith, and Mr. W. Smith, on the ground that a law had been passed for building the frigates, and that to abandon the object, would appear like instability and folly, and degrade the government. It was said also that it was best to finish them, even if they meant to sell them. Besides, altho' the United States could not consent to a great naval establishment, yet these frigates would be sufficient to protect our trade against the multitude of little armed vessels that now capture our vessels.

It was however determined to strike out the word, 42 to 34, until the general principle of finishing the frigates should be settled.

The following resolution passed and a Committee of five appointed to prepare a bill.

"Resolved, that provision ought to be made by law, for a renewal, under specific restrictions, of certificates which have been destroyed, of certain descriptions.

The following resolution was received from the Senate, viz.

"Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled, that the President be requested to adopt some speedy and effectual means of obtaining from the States of Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee and S. Carolina, whether they have ratified the amendment proposed by Congress to the Constitution of the United States, concerning the suability of states; if they have, to obtain proper evidences thereof." It was read a second time, when

Mr. W. Smith said he thought this Resolution would be best referred to a committee of the whole, as perhaps it might be amended, by proposing some other alterations to the constitution.

Mr. Dent thought this purpose would be best answered by a reference to a select committee in the first instance.

Mr. Smith withdrew his motion, and the resolution was referred to a select committee of five members.

The resolution received from the Senate yesterday, relative to the appointment of a committee to ascertain the election of the President and Vice-President, and to appoint a time and place for administering the oath of office to the President, was taken up, read a second time, and a committee appointed of three members, viz. Mr. Sitgreaves, Mr. Jeremiah Smith, and Mr. Parker, to act in conjunction with the committee appointed by the Senate.

### BOSTON, January 31.

Capt. Gilmore from Barbadoes, in 30 days informs us of the capture of the ship Ganges, capt. Elkin, of this place, from the Isle of France, bound home. She had been beating on our coast for a considerable time; till being short of provisions and very leaky, the captain was compelled to put her before a N. W. wind and steer for Barbadoes. He had entered the harbour—his sails clewed up, and his anchor upon the point of being dropped—when a boat was sent from the sloop of war the Favourite, commanded by the notorious capt. Wood—and he was taken possession of as a prize. The governor and inhabitants of the island reprehended the transaction in warm and pointed terms—and the Vice A. Judge refused to libel the vessel. Wood then took his prize from the port, and proceeded with her to the leeward in hopes of finding as great a rogue as himself, to assist him in her condemnation. This Wood being the oldest commissioned captain at the place, was commander of the naval force there, and amenable to no officer then at Barbadoes. The same commander had allowed the impressment of many Americans at the island—he did it to pick out the Englishmen—but many of the poor Americans were never released. On his passage home capt. Gilmore was at St. Eustatius, where he was told by the commander of a French privateer, that he had taken an Indiaman belonging to the United States, and carried her into St. Bartholomews—that she belonged to a person who had been indemnified by the English for certain losses, and therefore she would be condemned.

### NEW-YORK, February 6.

Advices from Genoa mention that a treaty is to be concluded between that republic and France, by which Genoa is bound to pay to France four millions and a half livrés. A cheap purchase of peace!

Intelligence from Brest announces a fleet