

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Monday, February 17.

Mr. Bacon, from the committee of Ways and Means, made the following REPORT:

The Committee of Ways and Means having taken into consideration the subject of the revenue and expenditure of the U. States for the present and two succeeding years, in particular reference to a state of contemplated war during a greater portion of that period, ask leave to report—

That the ordinary expenses during the present year, grounded on the estimates already laid before Congress, are estimated as follows, viz:

Table with 2 columns: Description of expense and Amount. Includes 'Expenses of a civil nature both foreign and domestic \$1,260,000', 'Army—exclusive of the additional military force \$2,581,000', 'Naval Department \$2,590,000', 'Arsenals, arms, ordnance, repairs of fortifications, &c. \$614,000', 'Indian department \$230,000', 'Interest on the public debt \$2,225,000'.

Total ordinary expenses \$9,460,000. That the actual receipts into the treasury during the same year are estimated at \$8,200,000.

Leaving a deficit in the receipts of \$1,260,000.

Which deficit may however be paid out of the monies remaining in the Treasury at the close of the last year, leaving a sum of 1,800,000 dollars on hand, which, in the opinion of the committee, it would not be prudent under existing circumstances, further to exhaust.

That the extraordinary expenses of the present year already authorized by law, or which by bills pending before Congress are in a course of authorization, are as follows, to wit,

Table with 2 columns: Description of expense and Amount. Includes 'Ordnance and ordnance stores, camp equipage and other quarter-master's stores \$1,900,000', 'Six companies of mounted rangers 108,772', 'Additional military force 5,112,360', 'Repairing vessels out of commission and purchase of timber for naval purposes 680,000', 'Erection of additional fortifications 1,000,000', 'Calling out certain corps of volunteers 1,000,000', 'Calling out militia 1,000,000'.

Total extraordinary expenses \$10,801,322 26.

The whole of which sum it is necessary and is accordingly proposed to raise by loan conformable to the bill herewith reported by the committee.

That the amount of the principal of the public debt which is reimbursable during the same year, consisting of six per cent. deferred and exchanged stocks, is \$2,125,000.

And in the event of stocks falling below par [thereby imposing upon the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund an obligation to purchase, in order to satisfy the annual appropriation of 8 millions of dollars for the reduction of the public debt] may amount to the further sum of 3,640,000.

Total amount of the principal of the public debt which may become reimbursable during the present year \$5,775,000.

Which sum it is also proposed to authorize the commissioners of the sinking fund to borrow, conformable to such bill as may hereafter be reported.

That the ordinary expenses of government for the year 1813, may be estimated as for the present year at about \$9,000,000.

To which must be added the interest then accruing on the loan proposed to be authorized for the service of the present year, estimating the same at 6 per cent. and amounting to 660,000.

Making the revenue necessary to be provided, for paying the ordinary expenses, and interest on loans for that year [and leaving the extraordinary expenses of the year also to be provided for by loans.] \$9,660,000.

That the receipts into the Treasury from the present sources of revenue during that year, calculating on a state of war during a greater portion of the present year, are estimated (conjecturally) at \$1,100,000.

Leaving a deficiency to be provided for by additional revenues to be received during that year of \$8,560,000.

Estimating the ordinary expenses of 1814 as for the present year at about \$9,000,000.

And adding the interest accruing on the loan proposed for the present year 660,000.

And also the interest then accruing on the loan which in all probability may be necessary to cover the extraordinary expenses of 1815, and which it would not be prudent to calculate at less than eleven millions 660,000.

Making the revenue necessary to be provided, for paying the ordinary expenses and interest on loans for that year [and leaving the extraordinary expenses of the year also to be provided for by loans.] \$10,320,000.

Estimating the receipts into the treasury from the present sources of revenue during that year at \$3,100,000.

Leaving a deficiency to be provided for by additional revenues to be received during that year of \$7,220,000.

Under this prospective view of the financial situation of the government, it became in the judgment of the committee their imperious duty, as well in reference to the obligations incumbent upon them from the general trust with which they were clothed, as also in deference to that portion of the message of the President of the U. States which had been specially referred to their consideration, to enter as early as possible upon a system of Ways and Means calculated to provide a revenue, "sufficient at least to defray the ordinary expenses of government, and to pay the interest on the public debt, including that on new loans which may be authorized."

Any provision falling short of this requisition, would, in the opinion of the committee, betray an improvidence in the government, tending to impair its general character, to sap the foundations of its credit, and to enfeeble its energies in the prosecution of the contest into which it may soon be driven in defence of its unquestionable rights, and for the repulsion of long continued and most aggravated aggressions. Should the ruinous system of relying altogether upon the aid of loans, for defraying not only the extraordinary expenditures of the present and succeeding years, but also a large portion both of the ordinary expenses of the government, and the interest on the public debt, including that on new loans, be suffered to prevail, and no additional revenues be seasonably provided, it will result, that the loans which it may be necessary to authorize during the year 1813, must amount to at least 17,560,000 dollars, and for 1814, to 18,220,000 dollars; an operation which, by throwing into the market so large an amount of stock, accompanied with no adequate provision for paying even the interest accruing on such as may be created, but relying altogether upon the decreasing ability to borrow for the purpose of paying such interest, must have a most unfavorable effect upon the general price of public stocks, and the consequent terms of the loans themselves. It may be added, that a system of that sort would, it is believed, be found to be altogether unprecedented in the financial history of any wise and regular government, and must, if yielded to, produce, at no distant period, that general state of public discredit which attended the national finances during the war of the revolution, and which nothing but the peculiar circumstances of the country, and the want of a well organized and efficient government during the period of that revolution, could at all justify.

To have withheld from the public view a fair exposition of the probable state of the fiscal concerns of the government, under the very first pressure of active war, or to have deferred submitting to the House such a system as in the opinion of the committee was indispensable to place the revenues of the country upon a basis commensurate with the public exigencies, would, in their judgment, at once have evinced in the eyes of foreign nations an imbecility of action and of design, the effects of which must be too obvious to be mistaken. And as it regards our own country, would have indicated a policy as feeble and short sighted as it must have been considered deceptive and disingenuous—as unworthy the rulers of a free and enlightened nation, as in its result it would have been found fatal to its interests, and paralyzing to all its efforts. It is obvious that the whole amount which it is necessary to raise in order to meet the anticipated deficit of revenue for the ensuing years, is indeed "moderate when compared either with the population and wealth of the U. States or with the burthens laid on European nations by their governments."

To doubt whether the "will or the ability" of the people of the U. States to bear such burthens as are indispensable to this end, would be to doubt their dispositions to meet seriously the contest which is presented to them, and would go far to prove that it had better not have been attempted.

To doubt the readiness of the government to bring "promptly and efficiently" into action the necessary resources of the nation, would be to cast a distrust over the sincerity of those pledges which they have so recently and distinctly given to the world in that respect, & would imply a suspicion of their firmness or forecast not for a moment to be entertained.

For a more full and distinct elucidation of the general subject which it has become the duty of the committee to present to the House, they beg leave to refer to the letter of the Secretary of the Treasury, in answer to the several enquiries made of him by their order, and which has heretofore been laid before the House—concurring as they most fully do in the general opinion expressed by him, "That what appears to be of vital importance is, that the crisis should at once be met by the adoption of efficient measures, which will with certainty provide means commensurate with the expense, and by preserving unimpaired instead of abusing that public credit on which the public resources so eminently depend, will enable the United States to persevere in the contest, until an honorable peace shall have been obtained."

It is then proposed by the committee, that the additional revenue which will be necessary "to defray the ordinary ex-

penses of government, and to pay the interest on the public debt, including that on new loans which may be authorized," should be immediately provided for in the following modes, viz.

1st. Additional Duties of Imposts and Tonnage. 1st. An increase of the duties now payable by law on imported merchandise, calculated to yield a net revenue of \$2,500,000.

2d. A further retention on the amount of all drawbacks allowed by law on the exportation of goods, wares and merchandise, calculated to yield a net revenue of 100,000.

3d. An additional tonnage duty on American and foreign vessels, calculated to yield a net revenue of 200,000.

4th. A duty on all salt imported, calculated to produce a net revenue of 400,000.

Total net amount of revenue estimated from additional duties of impost and tonnage, \$3,200,000.

2d. Internal Duties. 1st. A duty on licences to distil spirits from foreign and domestic materials, calculated to yield a gross revenue of 275,000.

2d. A duty on licences to retailers of wines, spirits and foreign merchandise, including tavern keepers, calculated to yield a gross revenue of 500,000.

3d. A duty on sales at auction of foreign merchandise and of vessels, calculated to produce a gross revenue of 15,000.

4th. A duty on all sugars refined in the United States, calculated to yield a gross revenue of 200,000.

5th. A duty on carriages used for the conveyance of persons, calculated to yield a gross revenue of 150,000.

6th. A duty on various instruments of writing, to be collected by means of stamps, calculated to yield a gross revenue of 450,000.

Total gross amount of revenue estimated from internal duties, \$1,725,000.

3d. Direct Tax. A direct tax, to be laid and apportioned among the several states, according to the rule prescribed by the Constitution—gross amount 3,000,000.

Total gross amount estimated to be received from internal duties and direct tax, when they shall be effectually organized, (or in 1814) \$4,725,000.

Deduct expense of assessment, collection and losses, at about 15 per cent. 700,000.

Net amount estimated from internal duties & direct tax for 1814 \$4,025,000.

Net amount estimated from additional duties of imposts & tonnage, internal duties and direct tax for 1814, \$7,225,000.

But which, on account of the ineffectual organization of the internal duties and direct tax, may not yield, in 1813, that amount, by a sum of 650,000.

Leaving the net amount estimated for 1813 \$6,575,000.

And for this purpose the Committee recommend to the House the adoption of the following resolutions, viz.

1. Resolved, That an addition of 100 per cent. be made to the several rates of permanent duties now imposed by law on all goods, wares and merchandise imported into the U. States.

2. Resolved, That 25 per cent. be retained on all the drawbacks allowed by law on the exportation of goods, wares and merchandise exported from the U. States.

3. Resolved, That additional tonnage duties be laid, at the following rates, viz. 1st. On all vessels licensed for the coasting trade or fisheries, 20 cents per ton a year.

2d. On all other vessels owned by citizens of the U. States, 25 cents per ton, on the entry of the vessel.

3d. On all foreign vessels, 1 dollar 25 cents per ton on the entry of the vessel.

4. Resolved, That a duty of 20 cents per bushel be laid on all salt imported into the U. States.

5. Resolved, That duties be laid on licences to distil spirits, at the following rates, viz. 1st. On stills employed in distilling spirits from foreign materials, at the rate of 75 cents per gallon on the capacity of such stills.

2d. On stills solely employed in distilling spirits from domestic materials, at any distillery at which there are one or more stills of more capacity together than 150 gallons, at the rate of 50 cents per gallon on the capacity of such stills.

3d. On other stills solely employed in distilling spirits from fruit, at the rate of 5 dollars on each still a year.

4th. On other stills solely employed in distilling spirits from any domestic materials, at the rate of 15 dollars on each still a year.

6. Resolved, That duties be laid on licences to retailers of wines, spirits and foreign merchandise, including tavern keepers, at the following rates, viz. If in cities, towns or villages, containing more than 100 families, 1st. On retailers of foreign merchandise, including wines and spirits, 25 dollars.

2d. On retailers of wines alone, \$20.

3d. On retailers of spirits alone, 20 dollars.

4th. On retailers of domestic spirits alone, 15 dollars.

5d. On every other four wheel carriage hanging on steel springs, 10 dollars.

6th. On every four wheel carriage hanging on iron or wooden springs, and on every two wheel carriage, with a top, or hanging on steel or iron springs, 5 dollars.

7th. On every other four or two wheel carriage, 3 dollars.

10. Resolved, That stamp duties be laid on the following instruments of writing, viz. 1st. On all notes payable to bearer or order, issued by any bank or bankers, at rates on an average of 1 dollar for every hundred dollars, with an option to pay in lieu thereof 23 per centum on their dividends.

2d. On all notes of hand above \$50, payable to bearer or order, having one or more endorsers—and on all bills of exchange, above fifty dollars, having one or more endorsers, at rates on an average of 5 cents for every hundred dollars.

11. Resolved, That three millions of dollars be raised by a direct tax, to be apportioned among the several states, agreeably to the rule prescribed by the constitution.

12. Resolved, That each state be authorized to pay the amount of its quota to the U. S. with a deduction of 15 per cent. if paid before the assessment is commenced, and of 7 1/2 per cent. if paid before the tax becomes due.

13. Resolved, That all the duties above enumerated, and the tax aforesaid, shall be laid and become payable only after the U. S. shall have become engaged in a war with a foreign European nation, or shall have authorized the issuing of letters of marque and reprisal against the subjects of such nation.

14. Resolved, That the said duties and tax shall continue until one year after the conclusion of peace with such foreign nation, and no longer.

The Report being read, was ordered to be printed, and made the order of the day for Monday next.

Mr. Bacon then introduced a bill to authorize a loan for a sum not exceeding millions of dollars—which was twice read and committed.

Mr. Porter gave notice that he would to-morrow bring in a bill to raise a provisional military force of 20,000 men.

The Speaker asked and obtained leave of absence, after to-day, for Mr. D. R. Williams, for the remainder of the session.

The House resumed the consideration of the bill for arming the Militia of the U. S. when several amendments were proposed and rejected.

Tuesday, February 18.

Mr. Porter, agreeably to notice, offered to the House the following resolution:

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to prepare and report a bill authorizing the President of the U. States to engage, commission and organize a provisional military force of twenty thousand men, in addition to the force already authorized by law.

The House agreed to consider the resolution.

Mr. Porter spoke at some length in support of his motion; when the question was taken without further debate, and negatived, 58 to 49.

The House resumed the consideration of the bill for arming the Militia; after several attempts to amend it, the question was "shall the bill be ordered to be engrossed for a third reading?"

This was opposed by Mr. Brigham and Mr. Pitkin, principally on account of the fines, &c. contained in the bill.—The latter gentleman denied the right of Congress to impose any fine on Militia men before they came into the service of the United States; and cited the act of 1792, to shew that no penalties were inflicted in that law.

Mr. Macon replied to them, and said there could be no doubt but the power vested in Congress by the constitution, "to provide for organizing, arming and disciplining the militia," included the power to make suitable provisions for preventing the arms from being made away with. It would be strange to say, that when Congress put arms into the hands of the militia, they could not make regulations for their preservation for the use of the public. The reason why nothing of this kind was provided in the law of 1792 was, Congress had not then put arms into the hands of the militia.

The House adjourned without taking the question.

Wednesday, Feb. 19.

Mr. Wright, from the committee in relation to American seamen, reported a bill for the protection, recovery, and indemnification of American seamen, which was twice read and committed.

Mr. Porter, from the committee on foreign relations, reported a bill supplementary to the act to raise an additional military force.

Mr. P. said, it would be extremely inconvenient for the Executive authority to make all the appointments of the officers for this additional military force immediately, for want of proper information on the subject; it would be particularly so, to make them all on the same day, and it was a rule in the army that promotions should be regulated by the date of commissions. This bill provides, therefore, that all appointments made during the present session, shall bear the same date. It was intended also to supply an omission in the law respecting the light artillery and light dragoons.

Mr. P. wished, if there were no objection, that the bill should be ordered to be engrossed for a third reading; but Mr. Quincy objecting to this course, the bill was committed for to-morrow.

A message was received and read from the President of the U. States; covering a report in compliance with a resolution of this House of the 19th of December, calling for a system of rules and regulations proper to be adopted for training and disciplining the regular troops and militia of the U. States.

Referred to the committee on military affairs.

Mr. B. Hall said, he found that considerable alarm had been produced by the report of the Committee of Ways and Means in relation to War Taxes, which he proposed to allay by the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Committee of Ways and Means be directed to enquire into the expediency of authorizing the citizens of the several states and territories to furnish for the seamen, marines and army of the United States, the various necessary articles of clothing—the expenses for clothing, &c. to be apportioned amongst the several states and territories in conformity with the constitutional principles of levying a direct tax; and whether, and how far, it may be practicable and expedient, for any and what articles of provisions or supplies for the army and navy, to be furnished by the citizens of the several states and territories, in lieu of duties, excises or taxes.

Some objection being made to the reference of this resolution, Mr. B. Hall said that ten millions of dollars could be more easily paid in this way in Georgia, than two millions in specie, why, then, said he, not suffer the people at once to furnish the articles wanted, instead of the money to purchase them with? It would, indeed take the business out of the hands of contractors; but that would be no loss to the nation. It was no more than a proposition for the consideration of the committee of Ways and Means. If they deemed the plan impracticable, they would say so. He hoped, therefore, it would be agreed to.

On motion of Mr. Rhea, the resolution was ordered to lie upon the table and to be printed.

The House resumed the consideration of the bill for arming the Militia of the U. States; and after several unsuccessful attempts to amend it, the question on the engrossment of the bill, was taken and carried 53 to 48. The Yeas and Nays were—

YEAS—Messrs. Alston, Anderson, Archer, Baker, Bassett, Bibb, Blackledge, Breckenridge, Butler, Cheves, Clay, Cochran, Condit, Crawford, Desha, Dinkinsmoor, Franklin, Gibson, Goldsborough, Gray, Green, B. Hall, O. Hall, Harper, Hawes, King, Laock, Lefever, Lewis, Lowndes, Lyle, Macon, Moore, M' Coy, M' Kee, Morgan, Morrow, Nelson, New, Newton, Pearson, Pickens, Pleasants, Ridgely, Ringgold, Roane, Sage, Shaw, G. Smith, J. Smith, Stanford, Wilson, Wright—53.

NAYS—Messrs. Bard, Bigelow, Elcecker, Boyd, Brigham, Brown, Calhoun, Champer, Chittenden, Davenport, Davis, Earle, Ely, Emmott, Findley, Fisk, Fitch, Goodwyn, Jackson, Kent, Livingston, Maxwell, M'Kim, Mitchell, Milnor, Moseley, Piper, Pitkin, Pond, Reed, Rhea, Roberts, Rodman, Seaver, Sevier, Seybert, Smilie, Strong, Sturges, Taggart, Tallmadge, Tracy, Turner, Van Cortlandt, Wheaton, White, Whitehill, Widgery—43.

Thursday, Feb. 20.

The only important subject under discussion to-day, was the bill for arming the militia of the U. States, which was on its final passage. A long debate ensued. Mr. Little called for the previous question, which was seconded—and a sufficient number rising in its favor, Mr. Speaker put the question in the following words, "shall the main question now be taken?" which was taken by yeas and noes, and lost, 62 to 52.

The practice of the House on such a negative, is to postpone the consideration for one day at least, to which practice the chair thought it his duty to conform. Alexand. Gaz.

Foreign Intelligence.

Late News from France.

New-York, February 14.

Yesterday morning, arrived at this port the fine fast-sailing Pilot-Boat schooner Flash, Mather, in 37 days from Bordeaux, with a valuable cargo. The Flash sailed on the 14th of January.

By the arrival of the Flash, several letters were received, of which the following are extracts:

"Bordeaux, December 29, 1811. Mr. Myers, the Consul, handed to us the following list of vessels given up by the Emperor, the most of which were sequestered under the Ransouilles decree.

"Ship—, at Amsterdam, burthen 300 tons, belonging to Le Roy, Bayard and M'Evans, having a cargo of tea on board, admitted by paying duty.

"The Star, at Bologne, permission to depart, and to go to Dunkirk to load.

"The Pocahontas, to Toulon, permission to depart, and to go to Marseilles to load.

"The Aratus, with a cargo of Tobacco, had been visited by British Vessels, and under the Berlin and Milan decrees, has been given up together with the cargo.

"The Whampoa, has permission to import her cargo and export the amount thereof.

"The Two-Brothers, at St. Maloes, has permission to depart with the amount of her cargo.

"The Adventure, at Nantz, has also permission to sail.

"Other reclamations are under examination whereof the result may be shortly expected."

Extract of a letter from a very respectable merchant in Bordeaux, to his friend in this City, dated the 20th Dec. received by the Flash.

"If we may believe the general reports in circulation, some definite commercial arrangement is negotiating at Paris, with Mr Barlow, the American minister; and it is said the result will be very satisfactory. The U. S. frigate Constitution is expected to sail in all this month, or early in January, and will, probably, be the bearer of interesting news."

FROM PORTUGAL.

Arrived at Norfolk on Monday week, the ship Sheffield, Captain Cowper, in 30 days from Lisbon, by which vessel we have received papers of that place to the 8th of January. A few days before the Sheffield sailed, a reinforcement of