

VIRGINIA FREE PRESS.

THE LEGISLATURE.

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.

RICHMOND, JAN. 14, 1831.

But little business of real importance to the people has transpired in the legislature since my last communication.

The question was put on the motion of Mr. Zinn, for the indefinite postponement of the bill, which was agreed to by the following vote: Ayes 106, Nays 71.

Resolutions were read from the Committee for Courts of Justice.—1st. That it is inexpedient to dispense with the Constitutional judgment of common law courts, at rules, and the confirmation thereof, in actions at common law.—2d. That it is inexpedient to authorize legates or distributors to sue at law, on bonds executed by executors and administrators, and that the Courts wherein such suits are instituted, be invested with the power of ordering a Commissioner to examine, state and settle the accounts of such executors, &c.—and of suspending such judgments as may therein be rendered, till refunding bonds be executed.—and 3d. That it is not expedient to extend the jurisdiction of magistrates, but of making their duties obligatory, and rendering them a reasonable compensation in some form, for their services—which were agreed to.

A resolution from the Committee of Roads and Internal Navigation was agreed to, for authorizing a contribution of \$3000 from the Treasury, and empowering each of the counties of Ohio and Harrison to raise \$1500, for opening and constructing a road, by the best and most direct route, from Wheeling, in Ohio county, to Clarksburg, in Harrison county.

Mr. Leigh, from the Committee for Courts of Justice, presented the following Report and Resolutions: The committee for Courts of Justice having according to order, inquired whether any, and what alterations are expedient in the Judiciary System of Virginia?—Whereupon—

Resolved, as the opinion of this committee, that it is not expedient to make any change in the jurisdiction of the county and corporation courts.

Resolved, as the opinion of this committee, that it is expedient to vest the equitable jurisdiction now exercised by the Superior Courts of Chancery, in the same judges or tribunals which shall or may be appointed and established to exercise the jurisdiction now exercised by the Superior Courts of Law.

On motion of Mr. Billingsly, the House adjourned.

So Wm. C. Butler was declared to be elected.

The bills—To amend the act authorizing the construction of a bridge across the Shenandoah river—to regulate the penalties of Sheriffs' bonds—and to authorize the Board of Public Works to subscribe to the stock of the Berryville turnpike company—were read a second time and ordered to be engrossed.

On motion of Mr. Marshall, the report of the committee of Courts of Justice, that it is not expedient to extend the jurisdiction of the Justices of the Peace, was taken up.

Mr. Marshall moved to amend the report, by striking out the word not, so as to reverse the decision of the committee, and briefly explained his views on the subject.

The motion was rejected, 51 to 52. Mr. Gholson moved to recommit the report, but withdrew his motion at the request of Mr. Jackson, who moved to lay it on the table was adopted.

On motion of Mr. Atkinson, the following resolution was adopted: Resolved, That the clerk of the court of Appeals be required to report in detail to this House the number of cases in that court remaining undecided, in which the Commonwealth is a party; the amount of fees which would have been chargeable to the State for services rendered within the last 12 months, if he had charged fees, as if such services had been done for individuals.

A bill "to provide for the opening and repair of roads in this Commonwealth," was, on motion of Mr. Caldwell, re-committed—and on motion of Mr. Miller, of Powhatan, it was referred to the committee of the whole House, to be taken up on Monday next.

was afterwards reconsidered, and the bill re-committed.

The engrossed bill "to amend an act entitled, an act against buying and selling of offices," was taken up on the motion of Mr. Williams, of Shenandoah.

The question was put on the motion of Mr. Zinn, for the indefinite postponement of the bill, which was agreed to by the following vote: Ayes 106, Nays 71.

The motion was agreed to, and Messrs. Newton, Morris, Leigh, Mason, F. G. Gibson, Miller of P., Seymour, Ferrill and Summers, appointed a Select Committee on the subject.

Resolved, That the Committee of Courts of Justice, on the re-organization of the Judiciary, was taken up.

Mr. Leigh moved the re-consideration of the vote making the Road Bill the order of the day for Monday next, and that it be made the order for Saturday, and the Report on the Judiciary for Monday.

Much conversation took place on this motion, between Messrs. Leigh, Gilmer, Williams of Harrison, Venable, Marshall, and Jackson, when Mr. L. withdrew his motion, and moved that the report be referred to the Committee of the Whole, and be the order of the day for Tuesday next, which was agreed to.

Mr. Maxwell, from the Select Committee on the organization of the Executive, reported a bill, which was read twice, and committed.

The engrossed bill—Authorizing Constables to require indemnifying bonds—was read a third time and passed.

The engrossed bill—Concerning the Hall of the House of Delegates, was read a third time and passed.

This bill authorizes and requires the Superintendent of the public buildings to contract with some skilful mechanic for the improvement of the Hall of the House of Delegates, in conformity to the specification and recommendations of a report, and in pursuance of a resolution upon that subject, passed by the House of Delegates on the 13th inst. and that the Auditor of Public Accounts be authorized to pay the cost thereof, on the order of the Executive, provided the same shall not exceed the sum of 800 dollars.

The bill authorizing the Board of Public Works to subscribe to the stock of the Smithfield, Charlestown, and Harpers-Ferry Turnpike, was read a first and second time, (by its title) and committed.

On motion of Mr. Venable, it was Resolved, That the Second Auditor furnish this House with a statement, relative to the James river Company, the Dismal Swamp Canal Company, the upper Appomattox Company and the Richmond Dock Company, showing the cost of construction of each, the gross amount of tolls and rents for the year 1830—the net amount for the same year after defraying superintendence and collection of tolls, and the cost of repairs within the year, where repairs were made together with such other particulars and calculations, as to the value of public funds vested in said companies.

On motion of Mr. Billingsly, it was Resolved, That the Committee of Courts of Justice be instructed to inquire into the expediency of amending the several acts concerning executions and for the relief of insolvent debtors, so to provide that before a writ shall be returned to take the insolvent out, he or she should be sworn to answer such questions, as shall be propounded by the Court or Justice of the Peace, before whom, he or she shall propose to take the insolvent oath, or such questions as shall be propounded by the creditor or creditors, his or their agent or agents, attorney or attorneys—And that such examination shall be taken down in writing, subscribed by the insolvent, certified by the Court or Justice, and returned and preserved with the schedule, and that such Court or Justice, shall have power to hear other evidence as to the fullness of the schedule, and to act accordingly.

Resolved, That the Committee of Courts of Justice be instructed to inquire into the expediency of amending the laws concerning the nomination and appointment of Sheriffs, so to require the County Courts to nominate but one person at a time for that office, and also into the expediency of fixing some uniform rule on the subject, removing all uncertainty as to what constitutes seniority amongst the acting Justices.—Which was agreed to, on a division—58 to 43.

Mr. Morrison thought the best plan would be to raise a Committee to inquire into all abuses in the Court of Appeals, from which the House could receive at large all the information to be obtained, not only from such sources, but from other sources.

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Resolved, That the Committee on Revolutionary Claims be instructed to inquire into the expediency of increasing the pension of Robert White of Frederick county, in consideration of his services in the Revolutionary war.

The bill concerning Attorneys, [restricting them from collecting the moneys of their clients, without a written order so to do, and from receiving 5 per cent on the amount of collections,] was taken up upon the question of engrossing the bill.

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