

most serious consideration of the legislature. It appears to the committee, that the removal of the mud shoal, at the mouth of the Severn river, would be a great national, internal improvement, and highly beneficial to the citizens of this state; a large expenditure of public money, must annually take place, the contracts and arrangements already made, will occasion a disbursement, within the limits of Maryland, of one million of dollars per annum, by the general government; and by thus increasing the consumption, afford additional facilities to the agriculturalists to vend their various products, and without being subjected to the fluctuations of foreign markets. The federal government have designated Annapolis as the place for victualling the fleets which may be destined for distant cruizes, and for such repairs as can be made in the roadstead, but the mud shoal at the mouth of the river is an impediment which prevents building large vessels of war, or more extensive repairs from being made in the state. The removal of this obstruction, in the opinion of this committee, will induce the government of the United States to establish at this place a grand naval Depot; the benefits of which would be incalculable; situated as Annapolis is, that city becomes by nature, an out port to the city of Washington, and by the removal of this obstruction, will become the general resort of the navy. Under this conviction, the committee recommend the adoption of the following preamble and resolution:

Whereas, a resolution No. 40 passed at December session 1817, authorising the expenditure of twenty-five thousand dollars for removing an obstruction at the mouth of Severn river, on condition that the harbour and port of Annapolis should be fixed on by the general government as a naval depot. And whereas the said port and harbour hath since the passage of said resolution, been selected and decided on as a naval depot to a certain extent, therefore,

Resolved, That the governor and council be and they are hereby authorised and empowered to cause said sum of twenty five thousand dollars, to be paid to the persons named in the above recited resolution, at such period of the year as may be deemed proper to commence this all important work, conforming to the requisites of said resolution, as to the security therein required from the commissioners aforesaid.

By order,

T. POLLARD, Clk.

Which was read, and ordered to have a second reading on Friday next.

Mr Orrick delivers the following report:

The committee to whom was referred the memorial of William Wilson, and others, of the city of Baltimore, praying that a law passed in 1818, entitled, A supplement to an act to provide for the appointment of trustees of the poor house of Baltimore county, passed at December session eighteen hundred and seventeen, may be repealed, beg leave to report:—That they have had the same under their consideration, and are of opinion that the prayer of the petitioners is unreasonable and ought not to be granted, they therefore recommend that the petitioners have leave to withdraw their petition.

EDWARD ORRICK, J. B. SNOWDEN, JOS. COCKEY, ADAM SHOWERS.

Which was read and concurred with.

The bill relating to sheriffs, was read the second time and will not pass.

Mr T Kennedy presents a petition from Christopher Griffith, of Washington county, praying a special act of insolvency; which was read and referred to Messrs. T. Kennedy, Bowles and Kershner.

Mr Stoddert presents a petition from Basil Nelson, of Charles county, praying for a divorce; which was read and referred to Messrs. Stoddert, Edelen and Rogerson.

Mr B. Forrest presents a petition from Charlotte Warfield, of Montgomery county, praying a divorce; which was read and referred to Messrs B. Forrest, Gaither and Darnes.

On motion by Mr. Edelen, the following message was read, assented to, and with the bill sent to the senate.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, February 7, 1821.

*Gentlemen of the Senate,*

We return you the bill, entitled, An act for the benefit of John Barnes, clerk of Charles county, and respectfully suggest the propriety, upon reconsideration, of your passing the same.

By order,

J. BREWER, Clk.

Mr. J. Forrest presents a petition from Isaac Clarke; which was read and referred to the committee on out pensions.

Mr. W. W. Eccleston presents the following report:

The committee to whom was referred the petition of William M. Robinson, Joseph Stuart, and others, citizens of Dorchester county, praying the passage of an act authorising the cutting and opening a ditch in said county, at the expense and cost of those particularly benefitted by the cutting and opening of said ditch, beg leave to report—That they have taken the same into their most serious consideration, and that, with every disposition to gratify the object of the petitioners, which contemplates the draining and improvement of a large quantity of low lands, they are under the necessity of reporting unfavourably to the prayer of the petitioners, for the following reasons and considerations—1st. It does not appear that all the persons who may be assessed as benefitted by the cutting and opening of said ditch, have given their consent to the passage of the said act; indeed there is not even a list of the persons through whose lands the same may pass, nor any evidence of their assent or any particular portion of them. There is no estimate of the expense of such an undertaking, and should the prayer of the petitioners be gratified, many persons might be subjected to an expenditure to which they never assented, and that too to an indefinite extent. Your committee object to the right of the legislature to force any portion of its citizens to improve their property against their own consent, unless upon strong and manifest considerations of public advantage. In the present case, they do not find those urgent considerations of public advantage, which would induce the house to exercise the highest power of sovereignty, that of taking from individuals the management of their own concerns in their own way. It does not appear what extent of property is proposed to be improved, nor what number of individuals are expected to be benefitted by the improvement. It does not appear that all or even any particular portion of them have been consulted with respect to the propriety and advantage of the proposed measure, and of course that your committee are unable to say, whether they will not be consulting the interest and wishes of a greater number of the proprietors, by refusing the prayer of the petitioners, than by assenting to it. The committee, under these considerations, are induced to recommend the withdrawal of the petition at the present session. By the next session the sense of the persons particularly interested in the work pro-