

An ACT granting INDEMNITY to sundry offenders on certain conditions, and providing for the trial of such who shall neglect or refuse to comply with said conditions, and of those who shall be guilty of like offences in future.

WHEREAS many deluded persons, from a pretence of redressing public grievances, have forcibly interrupted the regular administration of law and justice in several counties in this commonwealth, and have committed outrages which tend to the utter subversion of the constitutional authority thereof: And whereas the Legislature are willing to extend their clemency to all such deluded persons, provided they return to a due sense of their allegiance to the government, as well as determined to punish those who shall persevere in their destructive opposition:

Be it therefore enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, that all persons, of what description soever, who, since the first day of June last, being citizens of this commonwealth, may have been concerned in obstructing the sitting of the courts of law in any county in this commonwealth, or in any outrageous proceedings, which may have been done or committed by tumultuous bodies of men assembled for the purpose of opposing the authority of government; and due execution of the laws, be, and they are hereby required, before some lawful magistrate, to take and subscribe the oath of allegiance, prescribed in the constitution of said commonwealth, on or before the first day of January next.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the several magistrates, before whom the offenders aforesaid shall take and subscribe the said oath of allegiance, shall return certificates thereof into the secretary's office, as soon as may be, after the taking and subscribing of the same.

And be it further enacted, That all persons who may have been concerned in obstructing the sitting of the Courts of law, or in any outrageous proceedings, as aforesaid, who shall, before the first day of January, take and subscribe the oath of allegiance in manner as aforesaid, be, and they are hereby indemnified from all criminal prosecutions to which they may be liable on account of their illegal proceedings as aforesaid. Provided, nevertheless, that the indemnity granted by this act shall not be extended to any person or persons, who, after the publication of said act, and before the said first day of January, shall be concerned in obstructing the sitting of the courts of law, or in any outrageous proceedings, subversive of the authority of law and government; but they, shall in all respects, be liable to be apprehended and tried, in manner as is hereafter provided. And it is hereby further provided, that nothing contained in this act shall be construed to extend to indemnify any person or persons whatever from any suits or prosecutions to which they may be liable, for injuries done or committed to the property of persons of any individuals.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all such persons who may have fled as aforesaid, and who shall neglect or refuse, before the said first day of January next, to take and subscribe the oath of allegiance, in manner as aforesaid, shall be subject to be apprehended and tried before the Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court, either in the county in

which said offence was committed, or in any county within this commonwealth nearest thereto, where law and justice can be administered without apprehension of interruption. And all persons who shall, after the publication of this act, be guilty of the like offence, shall be liable to be tried in the same manner. And such trial shall be had, judgment rendered, and execution done, to all intents and purposes, in like manner and form, and if such offences had been committed within the body of the same county where the said trial may be had; any law or usage to the contrary notwithstanding.

In the House of Representatives, Nov. 14, 1786.

This Bill, having had three several readings, passed to be enacted.

ARTEMAS WARD, Speaker. In SENATE, Nov. 15, 1786.

This Bill, having had two several readings passed to be enacted.

SAMUEL PHILLIPS, jun. President. By the Governor—Approved.

JAMES BOWDOIN. True copy Attest. JOHN AVERY, jun. Secretary.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and eighty six.

An ACT for suspending the privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus.

WHEREAS the violent and outrageous opposition, which hath lately been made by armed bodies of men, in several of the counties of this commonwealth, to the constitutional authority thereof, renders it expedient and necessary, that the benefit derived to the citizens from the issuing of writs of Habeas Corpus should be suspended for a limited time, in certain cases:

Be it therefore enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Council, be, and he hereby is, authorized and empowered, by warrant, under the seal of the commonwealth, by him subscribed, and directed to any sheriff, deputy sheriff, or constable, or any other person, by name, to command, and cause to be apprehended, and committed in any jail, or other safe place, within the commonwealth, any person or persons whatsoever, whom the Governor and Council shall deem the safety of the commonwealth requires should be restrained of their personal liberty, or whose enlargement is dangerous thereto; any law, usage or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the sheriffs, deputy sheriffs, constables, or any other persons, to whom such warrant shall be directed, are hereby authorized and empowered, whenever they shall judge it expedient, to require the aid and assistance of such and so many of the citizens of this state, in executing the same, as they shall judge necessary. And all persons, whose aid & assistance shall be thus required, are hereby enjoined to yield the same, on pain of forfeiting a sum not exceeding one hundred pounds, to be recovered by indictment before the Supreme Judicial Court;—one moiety thereof to the use of the prosecutor, and the other moiety to the use of the commonwealth.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That any sheriff, deputy sheriff, constable, or other person, to whom such warrant shall be directed, shall have full power forcibly to enter any dwelling-house

or any other building, in which they shall have reason to suspect any persons, required by such warrant to be apprehended, in concealed, first demanding entrance thereinto.

And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That any person who shall be apprehended and imprisoned, as aforesaid, shall be continued in imprisonment, without bail or mainprize, until he shall be discharged therefrom by order of the Governor or of the General Court.

And this act shall continue and be in force until the first day of July next and no longer.

In the House of Representatives, Nov. 10, 1786.

This Bill having had three several readings, passed to be enacted.

ARTEMAS WARD, Speaker. In SENATE, Nov. 10, 1786.

This Bill having had two several readings passed to be enacted.

SAMUEL PHILLIPS, jun. President. By the Governor—Approved.

JAMES BOWDOIN. True copy. Attest. JOHN AVERY, jun. Sec'y.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In Senate, November 15th, 1786.

WHEREAS it was provided, in the Tax Act passed the twenty-third of March last, that one third part of said tax might be paid in certificates, issued from the Loan-office for the interest of the liquidated debt of the United States, provided that the same were paid, with a sum in specie equal to one half of such Certificates on or before the first day of January next. And whereas the delay in furnishing the Loan-Office of this Commonwealth with Certificates, will render it inconvenient to many of the citizens thereof to pay that part of said Tax within the time aforesaid:

RESOLVED, That the Collectors of the said Tax, in the several towns, districts and plantations in this Commonwealth, be, & they hereby are, authorized and directed to receive one third part of said Tax in Certificates, issued from the Loan-Office for interest on the liquidated debt of the United States, provided they are paid, with a sum in specie equal to one half of such Certificates, on or before the first day of April next, any thing in said act to the contrary notwithstanding.

Sent down for concurrence. SAMUEL PHILLIPS, jun. President. In the House of Representatives, Nov. 15, 1786.

Read and concurred. ARTEMAS WARD, Speaker. Approved. JAMES BOWDOIN, A true copy. Attest. JOHN AVERY, jun. Sec'y.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In Senate, November 17, 1786.

RESOLVED, That the several Naval Officers and Collectors of Impost and Excise Duties, now in office, continue to Exercise the same, until others shall be appointed in their room and stead.—And the several Officers aforesaid are hereby empowered to discharge and perform all the duties, enjoined or required by law, of such Officers respectively; any act or acts, passed the present session of the General Court, to the contrary notwithstanding.

Sent down for concurrence. SAMUEL PHILLIPS, jun. President. In the House of Representatives, Nov. 17, 1786.

Read and concurred. ARTEMAS WARD, Speaker. Approved. JAMES BOWDOIN. A true copy. Attest. JOHN AVERY, jun. Sec'y.

HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1786.

NORTHAMPTON: PRINTED BY WILLIAM BUTLER, A FEW RODS EAST OF THE COURT-HOUSE.

An ADDRESS from the GENERAL COURT to the PEOPLE of the COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS.

A period, when grievances are complained of, in diverse counties of the State; when the symptoms of discontent are manifest and alarming, and individuals resort to arms, to support their dissimulation, and oppose the Courts of Justice; it becomes the duty of the Legislature, to investigate, and, as far as may be, to remove the grounds of complaint; to undeceive those, who are misled by false representation; and if lenient means are ineffectual, to vindicate by rigorous and decisive measures, the honour of government, and provide for the security of the State.

The General Court have therefore employed the greater part of the present session, hitherto, in examining the causes of uneasiness, and the objections made to the measures of government; and in providing (as far as honour and justice would allow) relief from the burthens, under which the citizens of the Commonwealth have laboured: And we now request the attention of our constituents, to the state of public affairs; and the reasons, why compliance with the wishes of some of them, would be dishonourable to us, and injurious to themselves.

We have no doubt, that endeavours are used by evil and designing men, to alienate the affections of the people in general, from those who are concerned in the administration of government; but conscious of the rectitude of our intentions, we are convinced, that if the public measures are examined with candour, the confidence you lately reposed in us, will not be lessened; and that however great the public burthens are, attempts have not been wanting on our part, to alleviate them: No man in the community is exempt from these burthens; the members of the Legislature have their full share; and can it be thought they would designedly impose unnecessary burthens on themselves, or omit any thing that might tend to their relief from such burthens? Their duty and their interest, would equally forbid it, for the relief of their constituents would be their own.

As we apprehend a great part of the uneasiness in the State, has arisen from misinformation, we shall in the first place submit a state of the public debt, as well the particular debt of this commonwealth, as the State's proportion of the national or continental debt.

The debt of this commonwealth is in notes issued by the late Treasurer Gardner, and the present Treasurer, which are called, either consolidated or army notes.

The consolidated notes that have been issued, amount to 6,138,167 18 10
The army notes amount to 250,114 14 4

Of the army notes, provision has been made by the tax No. 4, for the redemption of 140,000. And by tax No. 5, provision is made for the redemption of 100,000 which being deducted, 1,388,179 13 2

The notes redeemed & received into the treasury for the sale of lands, &c. amount to 34,650 14 8
Which being subtracted there remains 1,353,529 18 6

The notes for which certain lands have been sold, and which have not yet been received into the treasury, will amount to 30,693 0 4

There remains therefore due from the Commonwealth, for the redemption of which no provision has been made by tax notes to the amount of 1,322,836 18 2
Of the consolidated notes above-mentioned, about ninety thousand pounds were issued for

the principal and interest of the notes, which had been given before the war by Treasurer Gray; the remainder were issued for money borrowed, and for clothing, stores, and other goods purchased, and for services performed, since the commencement of the war, at the price in silver, or reduced to that value, by the scale of depreciation.

The army notes were given to the officers and soldiers of this state's line of the army, for their wages, at the rate promised before any depreciation had taken place.

The national continental debt, is either foreign or domestic.

The foreign debt being for money borrowed in France, Spain and Holland, according to an estimate made by Congress, amounts to 7,885,085 dollars, which is equal in the lawful money of this state, to

7,885,085 10 0
The annual interest of which, part at 4 and part at 5 per cent. is 309,038 dollars, equal in lawful money to

309,038 0 0
This state's proportion of the above-mentioned foreign debt, according to the last requisition, is

353,925 7 0
This state's proportion of the annual interest of the foreign debt, is

16,564 6 0
The continental domestic debt, which is due to the citizens of the United States, for the service of the army, and the other expenses of the war, and which is on interest at the rate of 6 per cent. was estimated in the year 1783, at about thirty-four millions of dollars; but that estimate was formed parly on conjecture and parly on the account of divers persons settling of accounts, it is now computed at twenty-seven millions of dollars, which is equal, in the lawful money of this state, to

27,000,000 0 0
This state's proportion of the continental domestic debt, according to the last requisition, is

1,211,906 9 0
Of which sum we have now in the treasury of this state, in loan-office certificates and final settlements, received of divers persons settling of accounts, for lands, or for the old continental currency,

49,795 14 0
Remains, 1,162,110 6 0

Exclusive of the above debt, which is due from the Continent to individuals, each state has a demand upon the confederacy, for money expended and service done for the benefit of the continent; this state has large claims, and it is supposed we are considerably in advance; but there is no ground for the suggestion, that we owe little or nothing of the continental debt; for it is to be considered, that each of the other states has demands also, and some of them large demands; and the method of settlement, therefore, must be, to examine the claims of the several states, and the whole that are allowed, will form an aggregate sum, which will be a debt due from the United States to the several states in the Union; that aggregate sum must then be apportioned on the several states, and if our claims amount to more than our proportion of that sum, we shall have credit for the balance; but although we think the balance in our favour, on the settlement of these accounts, will be considerable; we have no reason to expect it

will be in any measure sufficient to answer our proportion of the above-mentioned domestic debt.

No endeavours have been wanting, on the part of this state, to effect a settlement of the above-mentioned accounts with the continent; a commissioner from Congress, some time since attended nearly a year in this state for the purpose of settling accounts; his attention indeed was chiefly taken up in the settlement of private accounts; since that time, another commissioner has attended as long, for the same purpose; a committee of two persons, on the part of the state, are chiefly employed in the business; Considerable progress has been made; but the accounts are almost beyond conception numerous, intricate, and of intricate adjustment, owing in a great measure to the different modes, in which the accounts were kept, and some times the supposed deficit of vouchers; and to the different paper currencies and their different rates of depreciation: But we hope the business will be accomplished, as soon as industry can effect it.

The other states, have not yet settled their accounts; until that is done, if ours were settled, we should not be able to know, whether we are in advance or not.

Although from the foregoing statement, it appears that a large debt is due, yet when our resources, and the manner in which payment can be made, are considered, we think the inhabitants of the commonwealth will be satisfied, not only that they are able to pay the debt, but that they may be discharged without greatly distressing them.

The particular debt of the commonwealth is almost wholly due to its citizens; the payment therefore will not weaken the state by draining it of its property. Considerable sums are expected from the sale of lands in the eastern part of the state, and every measure that prudence will admit, is taken for the speedy sale of those lands.

Of the national or continental debt, that part which is due to foreigners, must be paid in gold or silver; if the continental impost should take place, which there is much reason to expect, it would immediately discharge us from the interest, and in a few years from the principal of this debt.

Our full share of the continental domestic debt, is undoubtedly due to the inhabitants of this state; Congress have resolved, that the lands ceded to them by the individual states, shall be disposed of for the payment of that debt; and we have lately received information, that such measure have been taken for surveying those lands, that a very large tract may in a short time be disposed of for that purpose, and that purchasers will not be wanting.

The grant of the supplementary fund is complained of: The reasons why the Legislature adopted that measure, are expressed in the preamble of the act; and we think ourselves entitled to expect, that no one will condemn the measure before he has attended to those reasons. We hope that means will soon be devised to bring into the treasury of this state, our proportion of the continental securities: In that case the act will never operate.

We are informed, that the public securities are now disposed of at a lower rate than at any former period; But suppose there was no depreciation upon any of those securities, perhaps the sums we have paid in taxes, in hiring men, and purchasing supplies for the army, within the last eight years, are more than the whole amount both of our state debt, and our proportion of the continental debt.

If the public had been able to prevent the depreciation of the public securities, we think strict justice would have required it; but notwithstanding the most solemn promises of future payment, that depreciation has taken place; perhaps therefore a criminal breach of faith is not yet imputable to the public councils: But if, when it is within our power, we refuse to redeem the securities; what excuse shall we have? Can we be willing that the history of the American revolution, shall be blackened with the tale, that we refused to redeem the securities we had given to effect it; and that our