

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1782

Congress resumed the consideration of the resolution under debate yesterday; and on the question to agree thereto, resolved in the affirmative.

A question being taken on the third resolution, resolved in the affirmative.

The supplementary ordinance for regulating the Post Office was read a third time, and passed as follows:

AN ORDINANCE FOR AMENDING AN ORDINANCE FOR REGULATING THE
POST OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

Whereas it hath been represented to Congress, since passing the ordinance for regulating the Post Office of the United States of America, that sundry alterations therein, and additions thereto, are necessary:

Be it ordained by the United States in Congress assembled, and it is hereby ordained by authority of the same, that the privilege of franking letters be, and the same is hereby, extended to the inspector general, the adjutant general, ~~the judge-advocate~~ the director of the hospitals, the quartermaster general, the commissary of prisoners, and the paymaster general of the army of the United States; and that the same privilege be, and the same is hereby, extended to the officers at the heads of the like departments in any separate army ~~and to the commissary of marine prisoners~~; all letters to and from whom, on public business, shall pass free of postage; and in order to prevent the multiplicity of franks becoming too burthensome to the public,

Be it ordained, and it is hereby ordained by the authority aforesaid, that the allowance, not exceeding twenty per cent. on what would be the postage of free letters if they were charged, be discontinued, and that the public be charged with no farther commissions on free letters, though they contain enclosures, than the officers of the Post Office would be entitled to on the postage of the same number of single letters coming the same distance:

And be it ordained by the authority aforesaid, that the clause in the ordinance of the 18th of October last, which directs the Postmaster General and his deputies to furnish extraordinary expresses be, and the same is hereby repealed. Done, &c.¹

¹ This ordinance, in the writing of Richard Peters, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 59, III, folio 363.

Resolved, That the quartermaster general furnish all extraordinary expresses when the service requires them, any ordinance or resolution of Congress to the contrary notwithstanding.

On motion of Mr. [John] Rutledge, seconded by Mr. [Thomas] Fitzsimmons,

Resolved, That the Postmaster General be directed to continue the southern post to Savannah, in Georgia; and that the Superintendant of finance furnish the money necessary for that purpose.¹

Congress having received information that the State of Virginia has repealed its law agreeing to the duty on imports and prizes:

Resolved, That the deputation to Rhode Island be for the present suspended; and that a committee be appointed to report such further measures as it may be proper for Congress to take upon the subject at large.²

The Grand Committee to whom were referred a letter from the Legislature of Massachusetts Bay of Oct^r. 21, and a motion of Mr. [Samuel] Osgood, submit the following resolves, viz.

Resolved, That Individuals in each State who are possessed of Continental paper money be entitled to receive from the Comm^r. who is or shall be appointed to settle the accts. of the Several States and of individuals therein against the U. States a Specie certificate for all such sums of the said money, as they shall respectively pay into the hands of such Commissioner, at the rate of one silver dollar for every ~~forty~~ ——— continental dollars. The certificates to bear interest of 6 per cent from the date and be provided for, as other public debts are; but that no money shall be recd. or certificates granted by the said Commissioner after the last day of Dec. 1783.

Resolved, That the States which have not sunk the proportions assigned to them of the Continental money be charged with the

¹ This motion, in the writing of John Rutledge, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*. No. 36, I, folio 473.

² According to Committee Book No. 186, *Papers of the Continental Congress*, the committee consisted of Mr. [Alexander] Hamilton, Mr. [Thomas] Fitzsimmons, and Mr. [James] Madison.

deficiency or the amount of what they have not sunk at the rate aforesaid.¹

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1782

Mr. [Silas] Condict, a delegate for New Jersey, attended and took his seat.

On a report from the Secretary for foreign affairs, to whom were referred sundry letters from Dr. Franklin and Mr. J. Adams:

Resolved, That Dr. Franklin be informed that the allowance he has heretofore made and now makes to Mr. William Temple Franklin, acting in the character of his secretary, meets the approbation of Congress: and that his future allowance be three hundred louis d'ors per annum, until the farther order of Congress.

Resolved, That Mr. Adams be informed that Congress agree to the purchase he has made of a house at the Hague, on account of the United States, and direct him to take measures for transferring to them the title thereof. That on his furnishing an account of the balance still due on such purchase, the Superintendent of finance take order for the payment thereof.²

[Motion of Mr. David Howell.]

Resolved, That the Secretary for Foreign Affairs be directed to transmit to the Executive of the State of Rhode Island copies of the following extracts of letters from the Minister at the Court of Versailles, viz. From a letter dated Passy Sep^r 3, 1782. "It affords me much satisfaction to find the conduct of Congress approved by all that hear and speak of it, and to see all the marks of a constantly growing regard for us and confidence in us among those in whom

¹ This report, in the writing of John Rutledge, is in the *Papers of the Continental Congress*, No. 20, I, folio 141. According to the indorsement it was read December 24, 1782, Tuesday next assigned for the consideration, and on December 31 postponed. It is in the list of postponed reports in No. 31, folio 371⁴.

² These resolutions were also entered in the manuscript Secret Journal, Foreign Affairs, and in Secret Journal No. 4.