

CONGRESS.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

MONDAY, FEB. 9.

ON motion of Mr. GOLDSBOROUGH, [Md.] the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole, Mr. Tenney [N. H.] in the chair, on a bill relative to the administration of justice in the district of Columbia.

Mr. GOLDSBOROUGH proposed a new section, which was agreed to.

The committee rose and reported the bill as amended.

Mr. JACKSON [Vir.] moved a postponement till Wednesday. There was, to day, as on former days, *so little order*, and especially in that part of the house where he sat, that he had not heard the observations of the gentleman who introduced the section. The bill was important and required time to be considered.

Messrs. GOLDSBOROUGH and J. CLAY opposed the postponement, and the motion was lost.

SLAVE TRADE.

On motion of Mr. BEDINGER [Ken.] the house went into committee of the whole on the three bills relative to the slave trade. Mr. Varnum [Mass.] in the chair.

Mr. MASTERS [N. Y.] moved that the committee proceed to consider the bill received from the Senate. Ayes 31, noes 30. *No quorum.*

Some time after another trial was made. Ayes 41, noes 34. Carried.

The chairman read the bill.

The reading was frequently interrupted on account of the *disturbance in the house*, and the chairman three times addressed the committee on the subject, inculcating the propriety of *suspending conversation*, and *preserving order and decorum.*

At the request of Mr. BEDINGER, the bill reported by the committee of 17 was read.

On motion of Mr. BEDINGER, seconded by Mr. Sloan, the committee proceeded to consider, by sections, the bill reported by the committee of 17.

The first section was read.

Mr. D. R. WILLIAMS, [S. C.] moved to amend the bill by substituting the *punishment of death* in lieu of imprisonment.

The motion was opposed by Mr. Bedinger, and supported by Mr. Smilie, and carried—Ayes 43, noes 38.

The second section was read.

Sundry blanks in the bill were filled.

The *seventh* section was read. It ~~pro-~~ *pro-* ~~vided~~ *provided* in violation of the provisions of the bill, shall be sent under direction of the president, to such states as forbid slavery, or have enacted laws for the gradual abolition of slavery; and there indented as apprentices for a limited time, and afterwards made free.

Mr. EARLY moved to strike out this provision and to substitute another, directing that negroes should be delivered to the state authorities, to be disposed of according to the state laws.

Mr. E. said the inhabitants of the southern states would resist this provision with their lives. *We want no civil wars, no rebellions, no insurrections, no resistance to the authority of the government.* Give effect then to this wish, and do not pass this bill as it now stands.

Mr. SMILIE. This opens such a scene as I never expected to witness in this house. If it were not owing to the impulse of the moment, and to the influence of passion, I should think it extremely reprehensible. Are we to be threatened with civil war! that our laws will be resisted at the peril of life! Sir, this is new doctrine. The gentleman must know that we are not to be terrified by a threat of civil war.

Mr. EARLY said, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Smilie) had made a palpable misrepresentation of his sentiments I did not threaten the government with civil war. I only communicated the idea that military force would be necessary to carry the law into execution. I wish to know what has become of common sense. I disclaim the threat of civil war.

Mr. MARION (S. C.) was also in favor of the motion. If the provision was continued, the law would be wholly inoperative. *Were he on a jury, and the evidence ever so strong, he should deem it his duty, not to find a verdict against the man, charged with a breach of this law.*

Messrs. Cooke, J. Clay, Holland and Alston, spoke in favor of the motion—and Messrs. Bedinger, Bidwell and Goldsborough against it.

Mr. D. R. WILLIAMS moved that the committee rise.

Mr. COOKE was in favor of the motion.

Mr. EARLY said that he believed the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. Cooke) was sincere in his endeavors to procure a law which would not be injurious to the happiness of the southern states. He wished he could say the same of some other members.

The committee rose, reported progress, and had leave to sit again.

Four o'clock adjourned.