

4th CONGRESS.]

No. 73.

[1st Session.]

## REPORTERS TO CONGRESS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 29, 1796.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH, from the committee appointed to receive proposals from persons skilled in the art of stenography, who may wish to be employed by this House during the present session, made the following report:

That they have received from David Robertson, of Petersburg, in Virginia, the following proposals, viz:

He engages to prepare for publication an accurate report of the debates and proceedings of this House, on condition that he be allowed, as a compensation for the services, and for the payment of clerk-hire, stationary, and all incidental expenses, the sum of four thousand dollars for each session.

The committee being satisfied with Mr. Robertson's skill in the art of stenography, and ability to perform the service above mentioned, and being strongly impressed with the expediency of disseminating throughout the United States the most accurate information of the debates and proceedings of this House, recommend the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That David Robertson be, and he is hereby, appointed stenographer to this House, for the purpose of reporting the debates and proceedings of this House; and that before he enter on the duties of his office, he take an oath to perform the same with fidelity and impartiality.

The committee further report, that Andrew Brown, printer of the Philadelphia Gazette, being desirous of publishing in his paper the debates and proceedings of this House, from Mr. Robertson's manuscript, has engaged to pay him the sum of eleven hundred dollars each session for the said manuscript; which sum is to be deducted out of the four thousand dollars before mentioned. The committee, therefore, submit the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That the sum of two thousand nine hundred dollars be allowed the said David Robertson for his services each session; the same to be paid, on the certificate of the Speaker, out of the moneys which may be appropriated for the contingent expenses of this House.

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No. 74.

[1st Session.]

## ENCOURAGEMENT FOR USEFUL INVENTIONS AND DISCOVERIES.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 3, 1796.

Mr. PAGE, from the committee to whom was referred the petition of Frederick Guyer, made the following report:

That it is their opinion that application to Congress for pecuniary encouragement of important discoveries, or of useful arts, cannot be complied with, as the constitution of the United States appears to have limited the powers of Congress to granting patents only, intending thereby, as they humbly conceive, to secure to authors and inventors, for a limited time, a right to an undisturbed or unrivalled use of their respective writings and discoveries, to a full and fair chance of deriving every advantage from the approbation of individuals at large, which, upon mature consideration and examination of such writings and discoveries, they may be found to deserve. That such applications to Congress, if encouraged, might be too frequent to admit of a proper attention thereto, and to their peculiar duty as legislators; that as to the supposed discovery of the petitioner, they think it does not improve the method of ascertaining the longitude by lunar observations, as set forth in the said petition; and that for this, and the foregoing reason, the prayer of the same is unreasonable, and ought to be rejected.

4th CONGRESS.]

No. 75.

[1st Session.]

## MINERALOGY AND METALLURGY.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 12, 1796.

Mr. LIVINGSTON, from the committee to whom was referred the memorial of Nicholas Roosevelt and Jacob Mark, and their associates, made the following report:

That the said memorialists having procured from the mining countries in Europe a number of men well skilled in the arts of mineralogy and metallurgy, have them now in the United States, either connected with or employed by them.

That, by their means, they offer to explore the territory of the United States for mines of metals, semi-metals, and all other minerals, provided a reasonable time be allowed them to make the search, and the right of working