

*Chancellor of the Exchequer* acquainted the House, that he had a Message from his royal highness the Prince Regent to this House, signed by his Royal Highness; and he presented the same to the House; and it was read by Mr. Speaker, as follows:

“GEORGE P. R.

“The Prince Regent, acting in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, having taken into his consideration the many signal victories obtained by Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, has been pleased to confer upon him the rank and title of a Duke and Marquis of the United Kingdom: his Royal Highness is desirous of further manifesting the sense he entertains of those great and extraordinary services which have exalted the renown of the British army, established the independence and safety of Portugal and Spain, and contributed largely to the present tranquillity of Europe.

“The Prince Regent, therefore, recommends to his Majesty’s faithful Commons to enable his Royal Highness to grant such annuity to Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, and the heirs of his body, who may succeed to the title of Duke of Wellington, as shall tend to support the high dignity of the title conferred, and be at the same time a lasting memorial of his Royal Highness’s feelings, and of the gratitude and munificence of the nation.”

Resolved, That this House will, to-morrow, resolve itself into a committee of the whole House, to take his Royal Highness’s said most gracious Message into consideration.

PRINCE REGENT’S MESSAGES RESPECTING LORDS LYNEDOCK, HILL, AND BERESFORD.] The *Chancellor of the Exchequer* then acquainted the House, that he had another Message from his royal highness the Prince Regent to this House, signed by his Royal Highness; and he presented the same to the House; and it was read by Mr. Speaker, as follows:

“GEORGE P. R.

“The Prince Regent, acting in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, taking into his consideration the distinguished services performed by Thomas Lord Lynedock, a lieutenant general in his Majesty’s army, in the course of the war in Portugal and Spain, and being desirous to

confer some signal mark of his favour upon the said Thomas Lord Lynedock and the two next surviving heirs male of the body of the said Thomas Lord Lynedock, recommends to his Majesty’s faithful Commons the adoption of such measures as may be necessary for the accomplishment of this important purpose.”

Similar Messages were presented respecting Lords Hill and Beresford.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.] Sir *George Clerke* said, that from the inconvenience that was felt in the northern parts of the island, from the difference of weights and measures, they wished for a more uniform system. By the 17th Article of the Union, it was agreed, that the weights and measures should be the same in England and Scotland; but the uncertainty of the standard in England rendered it impossible to carry that article into effect. He would therefore move, “That a committee be appointed to enquire into the original standards of Weights and Measures in this kingdom, and to consider the laws relating thereto; and to report their observations thereupon, together with their opinion of the most effectual means for ascertaining and enforcing uniform and certain standards of Weights and Measures to be used for the future.”

Mr. *Whitbread* highly approved of the hon. baronet’s object; and hoped he would be more successful in the attainment of it than his predecessors in the same effort. The regulations at present existing were extremely inadequate, even as they related to fraudulent weights and measures; the magistrates being merely empowered to seize them; and in the very act of doing so, they not unfrequently rendered themselves liable to the operation of other laws.

Mr. *D. Giddy* warmly supported the motion; contending that nothing could be productive of more general benefit than the establishment of the regulations wished for by the hon. baronet.

The motion was then agreed to, and a committee appointed.

COPY RIGHTS.] Mr. *D. Giddy* said, that the subject of copy-rights had been considered in a committee, both as it respected the claims of universities and the rights of authors. Universities had long claimed and exercised a right of receiving copies of all works. With respect to authors, it was for a long time thought



that, unless the work was entered at Stationers'-hall, they could not claim their right. The contrary, however, was decided at common law; the consequence of which was, that the proprietors of works suffered much hardship by being obliged to deliver to the Universities a certain number of copies, which were often very expensive, and the sale of which was very limited. With respect to the copy-right of authors, different views were taken of the subject. Some thought that they had a right in perpetuity, while others were of opinion that it would be sufficient to a certain extent. The law now was, that the author's right existed for 14 years only. The class of books which the Universities were desirous to get, were such as were least profitable to booksellers, and it was a hardship on them; but there were other books, such as novels, which could be of no use to the Universities. The object of his Bill would be, to enable the librarians to call at Stationers'-hall for such books as they may desire to have. He would, therefore, move, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the several Acts for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies and copy-right of printed books to the authors of such books, or their assigns."

Sir *F. Flood* wished to know if the Bill was to extend to Ireland. He hoped the same number of books would be continued to the Universities in that country as heretofore.

Mr. *D. Giddy* said, at present there were only two copies allowed to Ireland; and he was not aware that the number would be abridged.—Leave given.

HOLBORN AND FINSBURY SEWERS AMENDMENT BILL.] Mr. *Whitbread* having presented a Petition from the inhabitants of St. James, Clerkenwell, contributing to the sewers rates, in favour of the Bill, which was ordered to lie on the table, moved the second reading, which was opposed by Mr. *Mellish*.

Mr. *Byng* spoke against the Bill. He admitted that great abuses had prevailed, and that the commissioners had improperly appointed Mr. *Henley* to be clerk and treasurer; but he contended, that the commissioners were competent to correct these abuses.

Mr. *Whitbread*, in reply, stated, that the Bill was a child of the member for Middlesex, but that he had deserted his offspring. He (Mr. *Whitbread*) had taken

up the Bill as an inhabitant of St. Luke, who was much aggrieved by the rates; and, as one of the constituents of the hon. member opposite (Mr. *Mellish*), he called upon him for redress. He trusted, from what the hon. members had said, that the House would support the Bill; as his hon. friend, and the other member for Middlesex, had both admitted that great abuses had existed under the preceding commission; that the same person had held the office of clerk and treasurer, and had thus done away a useful check; that although higher and more frequent rates than had ever been known before had been levied, a debt of 22,000*l.* had been incurred; and that contributors to the rates had been denied access to their accounts. The hon. members opposed the Bill on the ground that these abuses had existed under the former commission. He (Mr. *Whitbread*) had no doubt that the present commissioners were all honourable men; and that, although most of them had been on the former commission, they had set about rectifying some of the abuses, especially after the aggrieved inhabitants had determined to apply to the legislature. He had heard that accounts had been made out; but, he must complain, in an unsatisfactory manner; as explanation respecting the 22,000*l.* had been refused, on the ground that the present commissioners were not answerable for the acts of their predecessors. He (Mr. *Whitbread*) did not call upon the House to retrieve the past, but to prevent future abuses. Under the law, as it now stood, preceding commissioners had committed abuses, and future commissioners would have the same power. For several years past, a rate of one shilling in the pound had been levied; which, on a rental of upwards of one million, had raised fifty thousand pounds; a sum equivalent to what had formerly been sufficient for the rate of several years. Less work had been done, and more money expended. I had been said, that all amendments should apply to the sewers laws in general. It might be better if those laws were to undergo a revision; but if, in 1788, it had been found proper to pass an Act for the Holborn and Finsbury district, there could be no objection to amend that Act in the present year. He had heard that 500*l.* had been expended in tavern dinners. It was not fit that a public body should incur such expences as they would not have done in their individual capacity.