
REPORT
OF THE
COMMITTEE OF CLAIMS,
To whom was referred on the 14th ult.
THE
PETITION
OF
CALEB EDDY,

With instructions to inquire into the expediency of extending to the Refugees from the British Provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia a further time for exhibiting their claims for Lands, under the act intituled "An act for the relief of the Refugees from the British Provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia."

12th January, 1802.

ORDERED TO LIE ON THE TABLE.

REPORT.

The Committee of Claims, to whom was referred the Petition of CALEB EDDY, with instructions to inquire into the expediency of extending to the Refugees from the British Provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia a further time for exhibiting their claims for Lands, under the "Act for the relief of the Refugees from the British Provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia,"

REPORT—

THAT the act in question was passed the seventh of April, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-eight, and the time for applications under it limited to two years.

From the report of a former committee on this subject, made shortly after the limitation expired, it appears that *seventy-three* persons have presented their claims—Of these claims *forty-nine* have been allowed; *six* suspended for want of proof; and *eighteen* wholly rejected. So effectual were the means employed to give the requisite information, that few, it is believed, who were the real objects of the law, omitted to avail themselves of the relief thereby afforded. If there exist at this time any persons of the description intended by the act, who have not seasonably presented their claims, the omission, it is presumed, must be ascribed to their negligence, and not to their ignorance of the humane provision made for them by the government—towards such the committee conceive no indulgence is to be exercised, especially

when it is considered that the law in question was the result rather of bounty, than of strict obligation. Should further time be allowed, many claims may possibly appear; but the probability of ever ascertaining their merits can be estimated only by a consideration of the numerous difficulties which have attended the investigations already made—difficulties which it is obvious must be daily increasing. The farther we recede from the transactions of the late war, the more are those facts involved in uncertainty, on which claims might be founded for services or sufferings during that period—and the more is the government exposed to the arts of speculation and falsehood. To assign, therefore, certain fixed periods within which those claims should be presented for adjustment, were measures clearly suggested by sound policy and substantial justice. In the present case, those reasons which induced the limitation, forcibly urge that it should not be extended.—Your committee, therefore, respectfully offer to the House the following resolutions:—

Resolved, That the prayer of the petition of Caleb Eddy ought not to be granted.

Resolved, That it is not expedient to extend to the refugees from the British provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia a further time for exhibiting their claims for lands, under the act intituled “An act for the relief of the refugees from the British provinces of Canada and Nova-Scotia.”