foundly ignorant? No; with the principle of this claim we are all acquainted. Its object is to give some strength to a claim which has not the smallest foundation in justice, and they know it. They have no more claim on the U. S. than on you or me. Why then do they call upon us? Because the U. S. has an overflowing treasury. If I had it they would make the same claim upon me. They are the cormorants which perch upon the treasuries of all nations; and as long as you have gold and silver, and manifest a disposition to give, they will stick to you. I thought for my part that one discussion would have sufficed for them; on the presentation of the original memorial you listened to it and submitted it to a committee of the whole House. I was anxious that all discussion on this subject should have been waved; it might have been and I had hoped it would. I myself would have submitted my individual feelings to the harmony of the nation; and am sorry that I am now compelled to speak.

Mr. Lyon made some remarks to shew that the precedent adduced was in point. The object of the claim in precedent and of the present claim was to obtain a share of the land appropriated for extinguishing claims on the U. States for lands. Why then refuse that prayer at this time which they had granted on a former occasion?

Mr. Bibb remarked that there had been in the year — a general invitation to all claimants for land, and to these amongst the others, to attend and support their claim. At that time these claimants refused to attend. If the claimants then had not been heard it was their own fault.

Mr. Love hoped the resolution would not be adopted. He had voted for the reference of the original memorial, as coming from a respectable state; but the claim was perfectly understood by the House without the demonstration of an agent.

Mr. Marion quoted passages from record to shew that the case cited in precedent was not exactly similar to the present. Commissioners were appointed to receive terms of compromise from the agents of the land claimants and report an opinion thereon to the House. The committee reported in favor of the '95 (Yazoo) claimants, to the exclusion of the '89 (Virginia and South Carolina) claimants. The latter conceived themselves equally entitled, and requested to be heard at the bar of the House to shew that they should be placed on the same footing with other claimants. They were heard; and in consequence of the hearing an amendment was made to the law then under consideration. Mr. M. then read a part of the address delivered on this occasion by Alexander Moultrie, esquire, their agent.

Mr. Cook had yet heard nothing which convinced him of the impropriety of hearing the claimants at the bar of the House. He had never heard the subject illustrated before the House, although it had been decided on since he had been a member. It was now brought forward again, supported by the unanimous voice of a large and respectable state. The claimants complained of many hardships, amongst which, that they were not heard. He expressed his surprise that gentlemen who thought the Yazoo claim so iniquitous, should be unwilling that it should be heard. If it were a bad cause there would be no fear of its overcoming their judgment. If it were detestable, on a full hearing of it, they would detest it the more. He hoped the resolution would prevail, as he wished to hear the real merits of the case.

Mr. Holland rose to express a wish that the motion would prevail. He thought differently with the gentleman from Georgia, who thought such an admission and discussion would irritate the House. He hoped no member would individually advocate or oppose the claim; that every one would be ready to hear it fairly explained and decided on. He hoped if prepossessions existed on the minds of any members, they would do all they could to erase such prepossessions; at least that they would sit silently and hear what was said in favor of the claim. When persons had been heard in behalf of the Virginia and South Carolina claimants, they had conducted themselves with so much propriety that the whole House had been satisfied. He supposed that the person admitted in behalf of the present claimants would probe the matter so easily as not even to discompose the gentleman from Georgia. A gentleman had said that this was so well known that all knew that it ought to be condemned. In saying this, the gentleman was not correct; for commissioners appointed by the United States to investigate the subject had said that equity and sound policy required a settlement. Not only this authority, but more than this: this House had at one time taken up the subject, and on the main question there was a large majority in favor of

Therefore if the gentleman from Virginia had said it ought not to be heard, Mr. H. did not agree with him. I believe, said he, that it ought to be heard; I have always thought so, and I believe it must be heard. Sound policy and justice accord in requiring that it should be heard. We have by a very late acquisition from the Choctaw Indians acquired a large tract of land, part of the claim. Our public lands will not be purchased till the claim is settled. I hope the consideration will expedite the business: I conceive these claimants to have the same right to be heard as others, and more perhaps, because their claim has been acknowledged by commissioners appointed by the United States.

Mr. Dawson expressed regret that this matter should be so pertinaciously pressed upon the House. It may be remembered by many gentlemen in the House, said he, that at a former session of Congress, when the subject of claims in general was under consideration, by verbal information these claimaints declined being heard at the bar of the House. They then had the power and right to support their claim, and declined. I am now opposed to hearing counsel in their behalf. I remember the case of a venerable old man, who fought your battles, who headed your armies, whose head was covered with grey hairs, and bowed down by the infirmities of age, and who made application to be heard at your bar in support of his claim. The House determined that he should not be heard. And shall preference be given over him to persons of this class? I am convinced that it would only agitate the public mind, and therefore hope it will not be granted.

Mr. Bibb had entertained a hope, for the sake of the harmony so desirable at the present crisis, that their attention would not have been called to this detestable subject. He had hoped, from the past agitation, that their angry passions might have been calmed, and that they might be allowed the quiet discharge of the duty which they owed to the nation at this time. But he had been disappointed. Gentlemen seemed to think this a propitious time to press a subject calculated to create animosities and discord. No possible good could result from a discussioin of the claim. Gentlemen must be convinced that they would injure the American character by stooping to examine a claim founded in bribery, perjury and corruption. I am sorry to say, observed Mr. B. that the governor of a respectable state has taken advantage of his elevated situation to press upon the House a private claim. In that station I am sorry to say that he has become the advocate of fraud and corruption. But I did not rise to go into a discussion. I rose to say that if discussion does continue upon this motion with a view to force upon us the merits of the claim, I shall move an indefinite postponement of the motion.

Mr. Gardner was in favor of adopting the motion. After having spoken twice on the subject, as often as he could speak without special leave, it was not surprising that the gentleman should wish to postpone the debate. The gentlemen from Georgia seemed to be very warm on this motion. With great warmth also had they opposed the reference of the memorial on the subject.—He had heard these gentlemen accuse their own state government of bribery and corruption. They must have some foundation for this or they would not do it. But of this bribery and corruption Mr. G. knew not; he wished the matter to be investigated, and was in favor of the mode now proposed. It was a pretty important subject; it might have been investigated by some gentlemen; but of Yazoo he knew nothing but what he had learnt since he arrived here. According to the usage of deliberative bodies to admit counsel to investigate matters before the House, he could trust himself to admit this agent, and so should vote.

Mr. Chandler observed that he should vote in favor of the motion, as a precedent was shewn in which similar indulgence had been granted to other claimants. Much had been said about the subject's having been thoroughly investigated. It might have been, but it had not since he had held a seat in this House. Whenever it had appeared here it had been put down by hard words and the cry of Yazoo! He wished to know in some way the reasons pro and con, to hear both sides of the question. As to the governor of Massachusetts advocating an individual claim, the gentleman from Georgia was misinformed. Mr. C. had understood that the governor did not possess a cent of property in the claim; nor was he capable of taking advantage of his official capacity to advocate fraud and corruption.

Mr. Bibb said he would only observe that he had been informed by a colleague of the gentleman last up that governor Sullivan was one of the

chusetts, he was not acquainted with this subject; he knew not its merits or demerits. At all events the claim was intricate. If it was founded on corruption and fraud and perjury, and supported by falsehood, he should like to know: but he was not willing, because of these observations made by gentlemen, to say that it was founded in corruption and fraud and perjury, or that it was supported by falsehood. He wished to examine this as he would all other claims. There seemed to be something very awful even in the name of Yazoo: if that was the case he should like to know the whole of it; and if he found it so corrupt, he should give his vote against it and feel as much indignation at it as any gentleman. But what reason under Heaven could there be why this should not take the usual course, or why should there be so much cause for irritation? As far as he understood it he could not see why. Although many seemed to understand the whole matter, it should be recollected that there were 48 or 50 new members who perhaps did not understand the merits of the question. He hoped the resolution would prevail, and that they should hear the prayer of the claimants.

Mr. Love remarked that it was indeed true that there were many new members; but such had been the discussion which had taken place already on the subject, with the repetition by its publication in the newspapers, that he felt perfectly prepared to vote on the subject. He did not think it necessary on this occasion to travel out of the usual course; and no arguments had been used in support of the admission of counsel in this case, that would not apply with equal force to any claim against the U. S.

Mr. Durell said that there was something in this claim which required that it should be heard at the bar of the House in distinction from common claims. He conceived the Yazoo claim to be of the first importance; he did not believe that there was any individual claim of a citizen against the U. S. of equal magnitude. If gentlemen in discussing this and like subjects, would use argument and reason, instead of rambling at large and endeavoring to excite the passions, it would not be difficult to decide on the propriety of granting or rejecting the prayer of the petition. There were two points in this case proper for consideration: 1. Was the principle correct, that this House should in *any* case admit an advocate at the bar of this House to urge or demonstrate the right of a petitioner? 2. Was this a case of that description? He had no doubt that the principle was correct that advocates should be admitted, in support of which precedents had been quoted. Had there been no precedent, however, he should not have doubted. By the constitution the good people of the U. S. had certainly a right of presenting their petitions. In his mind it followed conclusively that they had a right of being heard by themselves or counsel. It was the universal practice in all the state governments with which he was acquainted. He supposed it to follow of course. It was not presumable that gentlemen of this or of any deliberative body should intuitively know the merits of any case. It was certainly necessary in order to pass understandingly in every case, that its merits should be known. How get at them? Not by reading the petition merely. It was not presumable that an agent of the claimant should be found in a member of the legislature. He knew no course then but to let in the petitioner, or, which was the same thing, his agent. If then it was right in principle, was the case before them such a one as to make it necessary that this privilege should be allowed? Several considerations occurred in favor of it: It was a case of magnitude, of great importance in point of property, none more so that he knew. Why were gentlemen agitated about it? Why were the representatives from the state of Georgia agitated about it? They wanted the business to be kept back to prevent the House from being agitated. Surely the single consideration that there was fifty new members would call for a discussion and fair examination of the subject. He was a new member; he had no interest in the claim to which the petition referred, nor did he know that there was a drop of his blood in any one who was connected in the claim to the amount of one cent; but he was unacquainted with the merits of the case, and wished to know how to get at them. He wished in all cases, but more particularly in important cases, to decide understandingly. How could he now so decide? By the information which the gentlemen from Georgia should give him? That might possibly be all on one side; for these gentlemen wished it not to be disturbed, not to be agitated either in this House or with the public at large. As he could not obtain information on the subject in any other way, he should vote for the resolution.

Mr. Masters could not see the

known. If a statement of facts was wanted, let a committee report them; they could not be got at by hearing counsel on one side of the question. It would form a dangerous precedent; and he hoped therefore that this subject would take the same course as others of a like nature.

Mr. Witherell said it had been shewn by a precedent that the House had once deviated from the common track to pursue a course from which he should ever revolt; and he certainly felt it his duty to state that in no possible case which he had ever heard of, would he vote for the admission of counsel. If there be any case of claim, said he, which demands a course similar to that contemplated by the resolution before us, it is in favor of the houseless foreigner who comes to you with a just claim, but who wants friends to support it. Has this course been taken in regard to such? No. A poor old Frenchman who thirty years ago fought the battles of this country—when he offered his petition for remuneration of honest services, did he ask for admission of counsel in his favor? No; he knew it would not be granted. He was indeed friendless in comparison with those who now ask the privilege. I have no hesitation in saying that the claimants have friends enough on this floor—more than you are aware of—and the ultimate vote will convince you of it. But when great questions are pending, as now, this of all claims which could be pointed out is the most improper for discussion. If gentlemen wish an elucidation of facts, can they have them better from the mouth of an orator than from a paper laid on the table. I say nothing of the merits or justice of the claim; but, though a new member, I am not altogether unacquainted with it—nor are there many in the House ignorant of it who have lived a fourth part of a century. Let it take the natural course, that the plain facts unadorned or embellished, may present themselves to the understanding of the House. That I never may, while these walls stand around me, have occasion to rise again on the subject. I now enter my eternal protest against it.

Mr. Troup said they were not permitted to avoid a discussion on this subject. With every disposition to express ourselves with coolness, said he, gentlemen have not permitted us to do it; they have gone into the merits of the question, and censured us for expressing an opinion. I oppose the admission of these persons, not on account of myself; I speak for the dignity of the House. It would be a matter of indifference to me individually, how many practising attornies were admitted within the bar of the House to advocate the claim; but if such a person were admitted, if he did not confine himself to the most indubitable facts, and these established by the most unquestionable testimony, I would arrest him in every step of his progress, a situation most unfavorable to rational and satisfactory investigation. Why are we so anxiously opposed to this claim, we are asked? Is it not obvious, if you compensate the claim, you determine that Georgia had no right to pass her rescinding act, and if you determine Georgia had no right to pass her rescinding act, you declare in fact that she fraudulently sold you the property of the claimants? For another reason too which comes home to the feelings of every man. When an infant state, as Georgia was in the year 1795, rising to consequence by her own resources, with a character to form and a credit to establish, its people well disposed and ambitious of an honest fame—when such a state is blasted in its first budding by the pestiferous breath of this foul monster Yazoo, it is enough to stir up in any man of sensibility for his country the most angry passions, and if we are intemperate we seek our justification and apology in the integrity of the House. We do not enter into the merits of the claim, when we are in this way driven into a desultory discussion against our will. The subject is not before the House; we shall speak in another manner when we come to the merits of the main question. We are told here over and over again that the preservation of harmony is all-important—that the crisis demands union—that the state of our national affairs demands it; and yet we cannot proceed one step in the public business but a Yazoo memorial or some such thing is ushered in to awaken all the dormant and turbulent emotions by the very gentlemen who are the first to cry peace when it seems they are determined there shall be no peace. Let gentlemen give us credit for our moderation & forbearance: let those be esteemed the real friends of this most admirable system of administration who set their faces against corruption in every shape, who strive to purge the country of the lawless banditti which infests every corner of it, of Yazooism, which is the mother of corruption. It has been stated by my colleague that the interference of the legislature of Mas-

not mean the people of that state, for I believe them to be generally virtuous, and well-disposed; but if the government of Massachusetts will array herself against Georgia and on the side of Yazoo corruption, if she will prostitute her power and sovereignty to the basest and vilest of all purposes, let her stand to the consequence. And if her governor, as my colleague has told you, will descend from the dignity of his station to patronize Yazoo, if he will prostitute the dignity of his high office to the most ignoble purposes, he ought to be tumbled from his seat; and I trust there is virtue enough in Massachusetts to put him down. Has the gentleman from Massachusetts read the Yazoo memorial? I did read it and was thunderstruck. What does this governor say? That the violation of claim in a free country is a violation of fundamental axioms, and may lead to a violation of the social compact! This governor Sullivan threatens you with a violation of the social compact—this man of Yazoo fame, and of speculating morals, threatens you with a dissolution of the social compact—he purposes to march his thirty thousand men into the Mississippi territory; and this agent, whom it is proposed to introduce, is his pioneer. Is not what I have stated fact? It is in black and white, and now on record, that the governor of Massachusetts has thus threatened you; and yet gentlemen can express their wonder and astonishment that we have feelings and express them! He hoped the motion would be rejected.

Mr. Chandler said that the very decent and modest manner in which the gentleman from Georgia had treated the governor and legislature of Massachusetts would need but little reply. Gentlemen would judge whether that decency which is always requisite had been observed. The governor in that case had acted in obedience to an order of the legislature; it then became his duty; and he had no more than complied with it. As to the claim, said Mr. C. I know nothing as I have said before. I have repeatedly heard it said here that the legislature of Georgia which originated it was corrupt, and I do not doubt the fact, or that they were corrupted by people out of Georgia. But it seems to me that it is very extraordinary that there should be such an objection to have light thrown on the subject; and all the petitioners ask, is, that they may be heard, that the thing may be fairly investigated; and it would not be a great injury to gentlemen once to turn their attention to the subject.

Mr. Eppes said he had not been present when the original memorial was presented to the House this session; but he supposed that the unusual respect shewn to this subject on the present occasion was owing to the respectful form in which it had been produced to the House. It has become fashionable to say, observed Mr. E. that these Yazoo claimants have never had a fair chance of bringing their claim before the public. What is the fact? The first year in which I had the honor of a seat in this House, the subject was fully and amply discussed: in the second also, as well as at various other periods: and every man living in a country where newspapers circulated, is well acquainted with it. It seems that the claim is now brought forward in a new form, like a scoundrel introduced into decent company in a new garb, who wishes to become the head of the company into which he is introduced. Last session the claim was rejected here; it has been renewed under a respectable authority. But because we have treated the memorial of a state with respect, are we to admit one of the gang interested in the original fraud within our walls? I hope not. Let the same course be pursued with this claim as with every other; at least let not an odious distinction be made in their favor. Have you not been told of a venerable patriot, now hobbling in your lobby whose claim you refused to hear by counsel? And will you grant to Yazoo speculators the privilege which you refused to him? This very company who now pray for a hearing, might have been heretofore heard, and why were they not? They were then perfectly indifferent about a compromise; they would indeed have accepted a compromize if offered, but they were not anxious about it; they wished to frighten the nation into an act of injustice. But now the tables are turned—the laws of last session or the session before, have put down Yazooism forever, have taught them to come forward now, and claim a right which five years ago they spurned. Whenever this subject is brought up, I shall meet it in every form, and so long as I am able, oppose it with my voice.

Mr. Quincy said it seemed to him in general practice that argument on this floor for the illustration of any general point was expedient, and in this case the main argument urged by the gentleman from Georgia and others, was a reason why the course