

examination, in a summary manner, to discharge the soldier from such arrest, taking common bail, if required, in any case upon mesne process, and commit him to the applicant, or some other officer of the same corps.

APPROVED, May 28, 1798.

CHAP. XLVIII.—*An Act more effectually to protect the Commerce and Coasts of the United States.*

WHEREAS armed vessels sailing under authority or pretence of authority from the Republic of France, have committed depredations on the commerce of the United States, and have recently captured the vessels and property of citizens thereof, on and near the coasts, in violation of the law of nations, and treaties between the United States and the French nation. Therefore:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, and he is hereby authorized to instruct and direct the commanders of the armed vessels belonging to the United States to seize, take and bring into any port of the United States, to be proceeded against according to the laws of nations, any such armed vessel which shall have committed or which shall be found hovering on the coasts of the United States, for the purpose of committing depredations on the vessels belonging to citizens thereof;—and also to retake any ship or vessel, of any citizen or citizens of the United States which may have been captured by any such armed vessel.

APPROVED, May 28, 1798.

CHAP. XLIX.—*An Act providing for the relief of persons imprisoned for Debts due to the United States.*

SECTION 1. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That any person imprisoned upon execution issuing from any court of the United States, for a debt due to the United States, which he shall be unable to pay, may, at any time after commitment, make application, in writing, to the Secretary of the Treasury, stating the circumstances of his case, and his inability to discharge the debt; and it shall thereupon be lawful for the said Secretary to make, or require to be made, an examination and inquiry into the circumstances of the debtor, either by the oath or affirmation of the debtor, (which the said secretary, or any other person by him specially appointed, are hereby authorized to administer) or otherwise, as the said secretary shall deem necessary and expedient, to ascertain the truth; and upon proof being made to his satisfaction, that such debtor is unable to pay the debt for which he is imprisoned, and that he hath not concealed, or made any conveyance of his estate, in trust, for himself, or with an intent to defraud the United States, or deprive them of their legal priority, the said secretary is hereby authorized to receive from such debtor, any deed, assignment, or conveyance of the real or personal estate of such debtor, if any he hath, or any collateral security to the use of the United States; and upon a compliance by the debtor, with such terms and conditions as the said secretary may judge reasonable and proper, under all the circumstances of the case, it shall be lawful for the said secretary to issue his order, under his hand, to the keeper of the prison, directing him to discharge such debtor from his imprisonment under such execution, and he shall be accordingly discharged, and shall not be liable to be imprisoned again for the said debt; but the judgment shall remain good and sufficient in law, and may be satisfied out of any estate which may then, or at any time afterwards, belong to the debtor.

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STATUTE II.

May 28, 1798.

[Obsolete.]

Preamble.

1798, ch. 53.

1798, ch. 67.

1798, ch. 68.

President may issue instructions to the commanders of public armed ships to bring into port certain French armed vessels, and to make recaptures from them.

STATUTE II.

June 6, 1798.

March 3, 1817, ch. 114.

Insolvent to make application to the Secretary of the Treasury,

Ante, p. 48.

who may cause an examination to be made of the facts of the case;

and upon proof of certain facts, he may receive an assignment of the debtor's property;

and on the debtor's complying with the terms prescribed by the Secretary; he may order him to be discharged.