

On the second reading of the bill to incorporate a company to make a turnpike road from near Ellicott's lower mills towards George-town, in the district of Columbia, the question was put, That the further consideration of the same be referred to the next general assembly? Determined in the negative.

The bill being read throughout, the question was put; Shall the said bill pass? Resolved in the affirmative, and the bill sent to the senate by the clerk.

The clerk of the senate delivers a bill, entitled, A further supplement to the act, entitled, An act to regulate and discipline the militia of this state, endorsed, "will pass;" which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table. Also the bill to incorporate a company for the purpose of building a bridge over the river Susquehanna, endorsed, "will pass with the proposed amendments;" which amendments were read, agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed. Also the bill to incorporate the convention of the protestant episcopal church in Maryland, endorsed, "will not pass." Also the bill to regulate the fees of the register of the court of chancery, with the following message:

By the S E N A T E, December 23, 1803.

*Gentlemen of the House of Delegates,*

THE senate did not negative the bill, entitled, An act to regulate the fees of the register of the court of chancery without deliberation. The numerous uncertainties and imperfections in every part of the act of 1779 for the regulation of officers fees, the contrariety of fees which co-ordinate officers demand for the same services, and the utter disproportion in many instances between the services rendered and the compensation allowed therefor, have become a theme of general reprehension and complaint. Had not a considerable portion of the members of the general assembly left Annapolis on the faith of the message of the house of delegates proposing a close of the session, the senate would cheerfully co-operate in the general revisal of the fee bill of 1779, but conceiving that this measure, which is of primary magnitude, requires the most mature deliberation, extensive investigation, and the procurement of public documents from every part of the state, they are of opinion that it ought not to be acted on but under the scrutiny of every member of the legislature, and when introduced to their consideration at an early period of their session.

Without expressing any opinion as to the propriety of reducing the fees of the register in chancery, to which the attention of the senate has been particularly invited, they conceive that a trivial and partial correction of an extensive public evil would lead to a suspension of an entire and general corrective. They would also suggest that the fees of other officers have been a more fertile source of public complaint and general inconvenience than those of the register in chancery; that although in some instances this officer's fees may exceed those allowed to the clerks of county courts and clerks of the court of appeals, yet that numerous services might be detailed, for the performance of which these clerks are allowed very liberal fees, when the register in chancery is required to perform services of the same nature without any compensation whatever; that by an act of assembly passed in 1715, ch. 48, all persons instituting suits in the court of any county of which they are nonresidents, are compelled to give good security for the payment of officers fees, which renders the collection of county clerks fees much more certain than that of the register of chancery, who is under the necessity of transmitting small fee lists to every county in the state, a great portion of which, from a variety of circumstances not within his control, are never collected; they would also take the liberty of mentioning, that the clerk of the court of appeals, the change in whose fees appears to have so particularly attracted the attention of the house of delegates, is allowed annually by the general assembly a considerable sum of money for transcribing dockets, when the same services are rendered by the county clerks and register in chancery, without any pretence of claim for remuneration. The senate decline a reconsideration of the bill to regulate the fees of the register of the court of chancery.

By order,

T. ROGERS, clk.

Which was read.

Also the resolution relative to the purchase of swords, pistols, cartridge boxes and knapsacks, endorsed, "assented to." And the engrossed bills No. 74 and 75, and from No. 97 to 110, inclusive, endorsed, "read and assented to."

Mr. Mitchell, from the committee, delivers to the speaker a bill, entitled, An act to incorporate a company to straighten and turnpike the present post-road from the Delaware line, in Cæcil county, to Baltimore city, through Cæcil, Harford and Baltimore counties; which was read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.

The bill annulling the marriage of Thomas Rowe, of Cæcil county, was read the second time, and the question put, Shall the said bill pass? Determined in the negative.

The following resolution was read, assented to, and sent to the senate by the clerk.

RESOLVED, That the treasurer of the western shore be and he is hereby authorised and required to pay the sum of six hundred dollars, out of any unappropriated money in the treasury, in quarterly payments, unto John Scott, as chief judge of the court of oyer and terminer and general gaol delivery for Baltimore county.

The bill for the benefit of the trustees of Charlotte-Hall school, was read the second time, and the question put, Shall the said bill pass? Determined in the negative.

The further supplement to the act, entitled, An act to regulate and discipline the militia of this state, was read the second time, and the question put, Shall the said bill pass? Resolved in the affirmative. Which was sent to the senate by the clerk.