

passage of the important Tobacco Law, on the ground that such proclamations were unnecessary.

Early in the session the Lower House was called upon to decide an election dispute between two rival claimants for one of the seats representing the City of Annapolis, made vacant by the death of Captain George Gordon. Dr. George Steuart, a close friend of the Calvert family, had been certified as elected by the aldermen of the city, and his seat was contested by Dr. Alexander Hamilton, the witty Scotchman, chronicler of the Tuesday Club, author of the *Itinerarium*, and son-in-law of Daniel Dulany, the elder, who had been certified by the mayor as elected. The contestants, both rival Scotch physicians, were ordered to summon their witnesses before the bar of the house to testify as to certain disputed votes. After hearing these the house seated Dr. Alexander Hamilton. It is of interest that the expenses incurred in calling the thirty witnesses, amounting to seven pounds, ten shillings, were ordered paid by the two contestants respectively to the officers of the house.

The old disputed question as to the force of the English statutes in the colonies, cropped up again in this session. The Lower House, ever insistent that all English laws were in force in the Province, unless acts directly at variance to them had been passed by the Assembly, formally resolved on October 18th, that in order to assure the purity of the election of its members and to prevent bribery and corruption, all English laws, and especially the Statute of George II, Chapter 24, requiring every elector or voter to take the oaths, should be rigorously enforced. The suspicion is aroused that this was now brought forward to insure the exclusion of suspected Roman Catholic voters. An election bill which could hardly have had the same purpose, however, was soon afterwards introduced to limit to freeholders the right to vote for members of the Lower House, but this failed of passage.

The Roman Catholic question as usual flared up at this session in the Lower House, and again the Upper House took no part in it. The matter came before the Lower House in the form of a report from its Committee on Grievances and Courts of Justice, October 29, 1753. This report repeated the charges that the growth of Popery in the Province had become notorious through the public preaching of priests and their perversion of many Protestant subjects; that Catholic and Protestant children were taught openly in Catholic schools; that children were sent abroad to the Catholic seminary at St. Omer's to be educated; and that the Jesuits endeavored to pervert the servants and slaves of Protestants, thus increasing the danger to the Protestant inhabitants in case of insurrection. With this report were filed various statements and affidavits from sundry persons including five prominent clergymen of the Established Church: Thomas Chase, Hugh Deans, Thomas Cradock, James Magill, and