

of Replevin out of County Courts" were passed by the Lower House, and lost in the Upper House (pp. 451, 479, 483, 494, 429, 431). These bills which were intended to broaden the jurisdiction of the local county courts were favored by the Lower House because they tended to decentralize the administration of justice, now largely vested in the provincial courts at the seat of government, and as being conducive to the convenience of the inhabitants.

For many years the Lower House had been resentful of the appropriation by the Proprietary for his personal use of fines and forfeitures not expressly granted to him by acts of the Assembly, which he claimed as his prerogative under his charter. Again at this session this question came up, and the Lower House appointed a committee of five to enquire by what right he did so. This committee was also directed "to enquire into the usual method of obtaining Replevins in England" (p. 450), as it was felt by the Lower House that the present procedure involved unnecessary court expenses and inconvenience to litigants.

Parochial and church matters came before the Assembly in the form of sundry petitions requesting enabling legislation. As no laws were passed at this session none of the petitioners were granted legislative relief. The rector, vestry, and wardens of St. Stephen's Parish, Cecil County, asked for the passage of a bill to validate certain vestry proceedings which had not been conducted according to law. In the Lower House such a bill was passed, to be smothered with other legislation in the Upper House (pp. 410, 455, 458, 473, 484). An act to this end was, however, passed at the session of 1762, and reveals that the smallpox epidemic had prevented the annual vestry election. A petition from the Rev. Charles Lake, rector of St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, and from the Rev. John Barkley, rector of All Hallows in the same county, praying a division by law of their parishes was, however, rejected by the Upper House without reference to the lower chamber (p. 410). A petition from All Saints' Parish, Frederick County, was read in the Lower House on April 23 and promptly rejected (p. 448). Its contents are not revealed by the journal of this house, but it unquestionably related to the proposed division of that large parish then presided over by the Rev. Thomas Bacon. It was favored by the Upper House and the Lord Proprietary, but had been held up in the Lower House at the last session because some of the delegates from that county could not agree upon the line of division proposed by the upper chamber (*Arch. Md.* IX, 400).

Other petitions of general, local, or private character were presented at this session. For undisclosed reasons no general bill for the relief of "languishing prisoners" for debt in various county jails was offered at this session, probably because of the demand of the Upper House that debtors to the Proprietary be exempted from its benefits, although the Lower House just before it was prorogued, ordered that a bill be drawn up for the relief of certain debtors languishing in Frederick County, but adjournment took place before this bill was introduced (pp. 425, 477, 494). Certain inhabitants of Chester Town, Kent County, again sought the passage of an act to enable them "to hold a