

Nine Lower House bills which involved changes in Maryland legal procedure were considered, but not favorably acted upon at the 1763 session. As no copies of these bills are known to have been preserved, one cannot be absolutely certain in every case why they failed of passage in the Upper House, but from their general tenor, or where amendments were added in the Upper House, the cause of their rejection or postponement seems evident. In its general purposes the legislation proposed seems in itself meritorious, so there can be little question that most of these bills met opposition in the Upper House either because they tended to increase the jurisdiction of the county courts at the expense of the provincial courts at Annapolis which were more directly under the thumb of the Proprietary government, or because they were looked upon as threats to, or encroachments upon, the prerogative of the Proprietary by diverting to public purposes fees or fines claimed by him personally, or because Roman Catholics were unfairly discriminated against. In four instances the bills were rejected in the Upper House, in two instances action was deferred upon them by the Upper House to a later Assembly; in one instance the Lower House itself delayed action; and in the remaining instance the Lower House rejected the bill after it had been amended in the upper chamber. The following is a list of the nine bills just referred to which are enumerated with abbreviated titles: (1) For the better regulating of proceedings upon attachments (pp. 261, 374, 375); (2) to oblige garnishers to give bail and to discover goods and effects attached in their hands (p. 304); (3) for the security of purchasers and others being protestants claimed by, or from, aliens (pp. 305, 359, 375, 259); (4) for quieting possessions, and enrolling conveyances and securing the estates of purchasers" (pp. 305, 357, 374, 375, 250, 259); (5) for the trial of all matters of fact in the several counties where they have arisen (pp. 305, 340, 375, 236, 256); (6) for issuing writs of replevin out of the county courts (pp. 305); (7) for the more easy foreclosure of mortgages (pp. 322, 374, 376); (8) to restrain the evil practice of continuing suits of law on suggestions of want of witnesses, etc. (pp. 384, 385, 389); (9) for equitable payment of money debts (pp. 380, 384, 389, 266).

Governor Sharpe prorogued the Assembly on November 26, 1763, to meet again the first Tuesday in May, 1764. No session was held in 1764, however, and it was not until after another election for delegates had taken place that an Assembly met again in September, 1765. At the 1763 session the Tobacco Inspection act was the only very important law that was passed, nor with the passing of the 1763 session was anything more to be heard in a future Assembly of the Proprietary's claim to the licenses from ordinaries—a subject of strife between the two houses for nearly three-quarters of a century. But when the next Assembly did meet the detested Stamp Act had been passed by Parliament, and the minds of the people, inflamed by this, were to be directed into new channels of political thought.

THE SUPPLY OR ASSESSMENT BILL

The anti-Proprietary leaders in the Lower House determined for political reasons to force the Supply bill or Assessment bill through that house for the ninth