single men, be sold into servitude for five years for the benefit of their creditors, on the ground that some of those named in the bill had already been in prison a long time, although they had expressed to their creditors a willingness to be thus sold, and these offers had been rejected. It was hoped that the Upper House did not wish to add servitude to the hardships which these unfortunate debtors had already suffered (pp. 161, 181-182). The Upper House in a return message, while refusing to eliminate this amendment in its entirety, was willing to afford immediate relief to those who had already been imprisoned for five years or more, and in cases where creditors had previously rejected debtors' offers to be sold. The Upper House, however, insisted that debtors without dependents who came under none of the above exceptions, be sold for as many years as would bring the time that they had been in prison and the time of servitude together up to five years. The Lower House accepted this amendment and the bill was then passed by a vote of 31 to 10 (pp. 194-195).

That this slow and cumbrous method of relieving insolvent debtors by special legislation, passed at irregular intervals, naming in the bill the several individuals who were to benefit, was inherently a vicious one, seems to have aroused the sympathies of some members of the Lower House. Before the act referred to above to free thirty-six prisoners had passed both houses, the house ordered on the motion of Parker Selby of Worcester County, that a committee of five headed by him, should bring in a bill "for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors" (p. 154). This was doubtless a bill of general scope, similar to the act passed in April, 1774 (chapter xxxviii), under which an insolvent debtor, without waiting for legislative action, could bring his case before three justices of the county court and have it promptly acted upon. Nothing, however, resulted from the Selby bill. It was on December 6 laid on the table, and a few days later was sidetracked by refering it to the consideration of the next Assembly (pp. 154, 212, 213, 229).

LOAN OFFICE

The Loan Office had been established in 1732 under the act providing for the issue of £90,000 Bills of Credit, to be paid off in not more than thirty-one years (*Arch. Md.* xxxix, 92-113). Under this act various taxes and duties were to be set aside and paid over to the commissioners of the Loan Office, or Paper Currency Office, or Office for Emitting Bills of Credit, as it was variously known, to be held as a sinking fund to redeem the Bills of Credit issued under it. The monies in the sinking fund were to be invested in mortgages (bonds) on lands in the Province, and in Capital Stock of the Bank of England in the hands of trustees in London. Under subsequent acts additional Bills of Credit had been issued, and other taxes and duties dedicated to sinking funds to extinguish them. None of these were to run beyond September 30, 1764, when all Bills of Credit, or paper currency, issued under the Act of 1732 and subsequent acts, still unredeemed and outstanding, were to be taken up and paid off.

The time had now come to close the Loan Office and bring its affairs to an end. The Assembly at the November–December session passed an act directing that the office be closed on the last day of April, 1766, after which time