

House, two of the men who had signed the letter, told him that they would appear before the Delegates if it suited them, but they were not sure whether they would or not.

As a consequence of taking such an attitude, these, as well as the men who had signed the petition, were brought before the Lower House (pp. 267-271). Two of the signers said that they were ignorant of the contents of the petition. This excuse was accepted. One man was discharged, who, though he admitted having signed the petition, claimed that he had never read it, while another went free by maintaining that some one else must have signed his name (pp. 288-289, 290, 292, 293).

In connection with the election in Baltimore County another petition was presented on November 18, 1769, by some of the inhabitants of that county. This petition, which was introduced in the Lower House, complained of the "Mal-Conduct" of Daniel Chamier, the Sheriff, and the "illegal return of Representatives." The Delegates ordered Chamier to appear before them and to bring with him the polls and proceedings in the recent election (p. 41).

A few days later, however, the Lower House reconsidered their action. This change was due to the fact that Sheriff Chamier coming from Baltimore Town, where there had been smallpox, might communicate the disease to some of the Delegates. Accordingly the charge made against Chamier was referred to a committee of five with instructions to enquire into the evidence and then to report to the House (p. 52).

When this committee, on November 30, reported on the length of the prior notice of the election the sheriff had given, the Delegates decided that this was not sufficient notice and therefore the election was void. Again Chamier was ordered to appear before the Lower House (pp. 55-57).

At his trial before the House of Delegates, after consideration of the evidence, it was decided that as the sheriff had been guilty of misconduct during the election in Baltimore County he should pay the cost of the petitioners' complaint against him. Chamier was also admonished to be more circumspect in his conduct in the future (pp. 75-77; see also *Arch. Md.* LXI, xci-xciii).

This was not the only time that Daniel Chamier found himself in trouble. On another occasion at another and later session of the Assembly the Committee of Grievances and Courts of Justice reported that the sheriff had been guilty of an illegal distress made on the personal effects of Job Garretson, of Baltimore County, who had complained about Chamier's action. As a result of his trial before the House, the sheriff was compelled, as before, to pay the cost of the complaint (pp. 386-387, 402-403).

The authority of the Lower House was involved in the case against Richard Lee, Jr., sheriff of Charles County. Lee, it appears, was accused by John Doncastle and William Wright of cruel treatment while they were prisoners under his charge (p. 45). The Committee of Grievances, to whom the matter was referred, said that it would be necessary to have the testimony of the prisoners themselves in order to come to a decision. The Delegates did as was suggested by issuing the necessary instructions. When Lee did not appear before the House with the prisoners, the serjeant-at-arms was ordered to seize