

As soon as the Lower House had expelled Mr. Hagar, it took up what was, in the long run, incomparably the most important thing it did in that session, the matter of a committee of correspondence with the other colonies. Letters to the Speaker from his Virginia and Rhode Island counterparts had come last session, and been laid before the House; recently others had come from Massachusetts and from Connecticut. The tenor of all was the same: let committees of correspondence be set up in each colony, committees whose business should be to obtain and spread information of such British statutes or administrative acts as related to the American colonies, and to correspond with each other on them. When in 1768, the Massachusetts circular letter about the Townshend Acts had been followed by the King's command to the legislatures of the other colonies to ignore it (LXI, ix, 399), the Lower House refused to ignore it, and was dissolved by the Governor, also at the orders of the King. Now, five years later, there were no such consequences.

The letters were laid before the House on the afternoon of October 13, the day the session opened, and they had probably been handed around among the members as soon as they arrived. Late in the afternoon of October 15, after they had taken time to expel Hagar, the House took them into consideration and "RESOLVED *unanimously* That this House most cordially accept the Invitation to a mutual Correspondence and Intercourse with our Sister Colonies." (p. 23). A standing committee of eleven members was appointed, consisting of Matthew Tilghman, John Hall of Anne Arundel County, Thomas Johnson, William Paca, Samuel Chase, Edward Lloyd, Matthias Hammond, Josias Beall, James Lloyd Chamberlaine, Brice Thomas Beale Worthington and Joseph Sim. Copies of the resolutions were sent to the Speakers of all the other colonies. The text of the letters received and of the Maryland action on them is in App. I.

The usual spate of petitions was received in the Upper House and referred by it to the Lower House; and some bills were introduced. A bill relating to leases made by St. Anne's Parish Annapolis was introduced on October 16, passed October 19, and passed next day by the Upper House. The unforeseen adjournment of the Assembly prevented its being sealed by the Governor, but in the next session it did become law (pp. 71, 193-194). Another bill to quiet some Frederick Countians in the title to their possessions also passed and also failed of sealing (pp. 10, 30, 32, 36), and, like the other, it too became law in the next session (pp. 72, 194).

CONTROVERSIES SETTLED

A bill "for the regulation of the Staple of Tobacco, and for preventing Frauds in his Majesty's Customs," brought in October 19, was passed on the 22d. (pp. 18, 25, 29, 30), and sent forthwith to the Upper House. Here it was conditionally accepted and returned to its originators (10, 12), who rejected the condition. The Upper House was as well aware as the Lower that the entire finance and economy of the Province hung on having a sound law for the inspection of tobacco, but they could not bring themselves to pass it in its present form. In the message accompanying it on its return they sug-