

Finding it impossible to bring money into the treasury, of sufficient value to meet the exigencies of the times, the General Assembly, at their first session in the year 1780, authorized and required the payment of taxes in wheat, flour, beef upon the hoof, pork, and tobacco, at specified rates. The resolute freemen of those days appear to have cheerfully paid into the treasury their last dollar; and then to have contributed with alacrity, under all the wasteful disadvantages of such a mode of contribution, a share even of their provisions for the support of those who had taken the field in the common cause. These taxes in kind, or these "*specifics*," as they were called in those days, were collected in many different warehouses, and places of deposite throughout the State; and, as circumstances required, were distributed and handed over to the army, or the public creditors, or sold to raise money to meet instant and pressing demands. And, as we have seen, it was made optional with the chancellor, in the year 1782, to draw his salary in bills of credit of the last emission, or *in wheat*, one of those *specifics*. Such was the general pecuniary and fiscal poverty, and embarrassment of the first years of the republic, that, at the April session of 1782, an act was passed declaring, that no suit should be brought for the recovery of any debt unless the debtor had neglected to pay interest, or had refused to deliver any property he might have for sale, to his creditor in payment at a fair valuation; and further, that the time from thence until the first of January, 1784, should not be estimated in the limitation to the prosecution of suits.

About the close of the year 1783, there being every reason to hope for a rapid restoration of a sound circulating medium, with which the taxes might be paid, and the treasury replenished, the law allowing the payment of taxes *in kind* was abolished; and the *specifics* on hand were ordered to be sold. The finances of the State in fact recovered, as was expected; but they were not so soon cleared of all embarrassment, and re-established upon so regular and permanent a basis, as to enable the General Assembly, immediately, to determine what *amount* of salaries could, with propriety, be secured to the judicial officers during the continuance of their commissions, as was required by the constitution. (q)

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(q) The authority for what is stated in this and the three preceding paragraphs, relative to the paper currency and the pecuniary condition of the country in general, may be found in the history of the Union and in the proceedings of Congress