

place within their said counties respectively as to them shall seem meet, to qualify themselves for the office of trustees for the poor of their county, which they are to do by taking and subscribing the several oaths, or affirmations, appointed by law to be taken to the government, and subscribing a declaration of their belief in the christian religion, and also taking the following oath, viz. "I, A. B. do swear, or affirm, that I will duly and faithfully discharge the duties and trusts committed to me as a trustee for the poor of Montgomery or Harford county, as the case may be, by an act of the general assembly, entitled, An act for the relief of the poor in Montgomery and Harford counties, according to the best of my skill and knowledge. So help me God:" The which oaths are to be administered by any of the persons last named for the county to the persons first named, or in his absence to any one of the persons first named that shall be there present, the which person, being sworn as aforesaid, shall administer the oaths aforementioned to all the rest, and so successively, the person first named, that shall be present, shall always administer the said oaths to any that have been absent, or that shall hereafter be elected and chosen pursuant to the directions of this act to supply the place of any that shall be dead or removed out of the county, or if any shall refuse or neglect to qualify, or be rendered incapable of acting as a trustee, when elected and chosen pursuant to the directions of this act; and the aforesaid persons, or the majority of them, being sworn as aforesaid, shall be constituted and qualified as trustees of the poor of their said county, and as such are hereby invested with full power and authority, as a body politic, to plead and be impleaded, to sue and be sued, to defend and be defended, to answer and be answered, by the name of the trustees of the poor of Montgomery or Harford county, as the case may be, in all and every cause, complaint and action, real, personal or mixed, of whatever kind or nature it shall be, in any court of judicature within this state, and by that name they, and any of them, and their successors, shall and they are hereby enabled to take, hold, possess and enjoy, any gift, donation or present, which shall or may hereafter be given, devised or bequeathed, by any person or persons whatsoever, to them, or any of them, for or towards the support and maintenance of the poor in their respective counties; and they, or any of them, may receive, by way of subscription, any sum or sums of money which shall or may be given for the better and more speedy promoting the benefit and good by this act intended; and that they have full power, authority and ability, to purchase, take, hold, receive, enjoy and have, to them and their successors for ever, any lands, tenements and hereditaments, not exceeding the yearly value of five hundred pounds current money, and are hereby respectively empowered and authorized to use one common seal in their business, relating to the said corporation, and the same, if necessary, to change and alter; and that the said persons so incorporated, and their successors, shall be the true and undoubted trustees, in perpetual succession for ever, to be continued in way and manner hereafter specified, with full and absolute power, liberty and authority, in the making and ordaining such laws, orders and rules, for the better relieving, regulating, and setting the poor to work, and punishing vagrants, beggars, vagabonds and offenders, and for the good government of the said alms and work-house in their said counties respectively, as to them and their successors shall, from time to time, think most fit and requisite, all which shall be observed by the overseers of such alms and work-houses, and by all poor, beggars, vagrants, vagabonds and offenders, in such alms and work-houses, under the penalties therein contained. Provided always, that the said rules, laws and orders, be no ways contrary to the laws of this state.

IV. And, to perpetuate the succession of the aforesaid number of seven trustees for the said counties, **Be it enacted, by the General Assembly of Maryland,** That as often as any one of the said trustees for the poor in the said counties shall die, or remove himself out of the county, refuse to qualify by taking and subscribing the oaths or affirmations, and subscribing the declaration aforesaid, or become incapable of acting, the trustees for the time being for the county wherein such vacancy shall happen, then surviving and remaining within the said county, or the major part of them, are hereby authorized and required to elect, nominate and choose, one of the principal inhabitants of the county in the place and room

C H A P.
XVI.

How vacancies are to be filled, &c.