

On motion by Mr. Stevens. Ordered. That the report of the state's agent for the eastern shore be placed on the journal of the house.

To the honourable the House of Delegates of Maryland.

The state's agent for the eastern shore begs leave to report—That in compliance with the act of the last session, he visited in the last spring and fall, the different counties on this shore, for the purpose of settling the accounts of the clerks, sheriffs and collectors, of those counties; and in the general, he is glad to say, he found the officers prompt in the adjustment of their accounts. In the spring of the year, after settling the accounts of the clerks and sheriffs of Kent and Queen-Anne's counties, he was detained in Centreville, till about the 15th day of May, by the sitting of Queen Anne's county court, in which he was engaged as a practising attorney, and as public prosecutor. About the first of May, the clerks and sheriffs of Somerset, Dorchester and Caroline counties, made their semi annual visit to the treasury office of the E. shore, and settled their accounts. The agent was, however, still compelled to go to those counties to look after delinquent collectors, and late sheriffs and while on this visit he looked into the accounts so settled, and found them to be correct. In all cases of one year's standing, he caused suits to be instituted, unless prevented by special reasons, and caused notices of an intended motion, (at each court,) to have judgments entered at the first term, to be served on the principals and securities. He found several cases in which officers had died indebted to the state, and called upon the legal representatives for settlement; and upon their neglect the office bonds were put in suit; but notices were not served, because the agent did not believe that such cases were within the provisions of the act of last session. The agent would respectfully suggest, that the law of the last session, while it requires notices to be given to the defendants, of the intended motions to enter judgments against them, makes no provision for the service of the said notices. It could hardly have been the intention of the legislature, that this duty should devolve on the agents themselves, or that they, from their own scanty allowance, should employ, at their own expense, persons to serve the notices. If the agents were required to give the notice, their whole time would be employed in serving them, and then proving them in court. Indeed, it would be often impracticable; because frequently two courts are sitting in different districts at the same time. The agent found some difficulty in settling with several of the county clerks, in regard to their fees on marriage licenses. They claimed first, five shillings for granting the licenses, and then, under the act of December session 1822, they charged six per cent, alleging that this was no repeal of the law allowing them five shillings. The clerk of Cecil said he had the opinion of the county court in his favour. But the agent being of a different opinion, could not consent to the allowance, and this claim remains unsettled. The agent, therefore, would beg leave to call the attention of the legislature to this subject, and to a revision of the revenue laws generally. The states agent begs leave to call the attention of the legislature to another subject, deeply involving the interests of the state; which is, the granting of indulgences to state debtors, without inquiry into the circumstances of the cases. Thousands of dollars have been lost to the state, on this shore, by these indulgences—writs of fieri facias have frequently issued, property taken, and afterwards stays have been given by the legislature, until the defendants and sheriffs have died, and the property levied on, has perished. The agent would respectfully