

Mr. Maxcy reports a supplement to an act relative to licences, passed at December session, 1824, chapter 148.

Mr. Perry reports a bill, entitled, An act to regulate the proceedings upon suits now or hereafter to be brought on the bonds of the clerks of the several county courts, clerk of the court of appeals, register in chancery, and registers of wills, in the several counties.

Mr. Maxcy reports a bill, entitled, An act supplementary to an act to regulate lotteries.

Mr. Hughes reports a bill, entitled, An act directing the manner of settling disputes relative to officers fees, and for other purposes.

Mr. Tyson delivers the following report:

The committee, to whom was referred the memorial of sundry citizens of Baltimore, praying for the redress of certain grievances, beg leave to report—

That they have carefully considered the same, and find the grievances of the memorialists to be in substance as follows:

1st. That the common and the statute law of England have been too extensively, and even servilely, adopted in the state of Maryland.

2nd. That the English decisions, under those laws, both before and after the declaration of our independence, have been too blindly followed.

3d. That the forms of justice, and the proceedings in our courts, are too perplexed, too full of ambiguity and jargon.

4th. That even in the laws enacted by our own legislature, great confusion and embarrassment prevails, to the injury of the community.

While your committee bow with reverence to the wisdom of antiquity, while they join in the praises, which even the most enlightened jurists of every country have extended towards the general principles of the common law of England; while they acknowledge, with gratitude, the degree of light and knowledge which these have generated throughout our country; they must admit, that many of its provisions have nothing but their antiquity to recommend them; that many of its general principles are unsuited to the genius of this country; and that the adoption of these has darkened the light, which otherwise would be unimpaired in brilliancy.

The numerous fictions which under the common law, have been conjured up from time to time, to supply, by imagination, what should have been established in reality; the vast and various circumlocutions adopted, in order that, that justice may be done indirectly, which cannot be directly done, under the strict provisions of the common law; induce your committee to believe, that this law should be at once submitted to the thorough-going hand of reformation.

Your committee further report, that the second complaint of the petitioners is too well grounded, and that our courts of justice have long been too much under the dominion of precedent; nay, so strong is this dominion, that a judge often finds himself obliged to surrender even his reason, to the power of authority. This reverence of authority is not confined to adjudications made before the establishment of our government, but English decisions made even since that time, the decisions of certain state courts, the decisions of foreign powers, (in reference to Maryland,) have been respected as infallible oracles of legal wisdom.

The third grievance stated by the petitioners is not without foundation. "The forms of justice, and the proceedings in our courts of law, are too perplexed, too full of jargon." The judicial practice, from the commencement of a legal proceeding to its close, is involved in tech-