

a copy of the said notice is herewith transmitted; and he also urged the justices of several courts to meet and levy the sum required by the act of last session for raising a revenue for the support of government; some of them complied. Harford county was the first to pay her quota. The levy court of Washington also acted promptly, and the agent had the pleasure of bringing down from the sheriff the amount due from that county. Calvert county has paid since the session commenced, and some of the other counties will pay their quota in a few weeks.

There has not been any state agent to attend to the collection of debts due to the state for upwards of twenty years, which is one reason why the outstanding debts have accumulated to so great an amount. The indulgence granted by resolutions of the legislature has also tended to increase the amount of balances, and has occasioned loss to the state. Yet the agent has the satisfaction to state, that with the exception of the debt due by the Potomac company, he has collected or secured almost every debt returned to him by the treasurer that has not been outstanding more than twenty years; and in one case he has got in a fair train for settlement a debt due for about thirty years, which has long been returned as invalid.

And the agent has also the pleasure of saying, that all the monies paid into the treasury have been collected without execution or distress, nor has he commenced a suit except in one single instance, and that was against the securities of Gustavus Scott, deceased, who did not seem willing to make any satisfactory arrangement of the balance due to the state.

There is one branch of revenue which produces but little to the state, and causes much trouble and inconvenience to county clerks and sheriffs; it is that of amerciments. Under a very old act of assembly the state is entitled to fifty cents in every case in court where a judgement is rendered; one half of the amerciments are generally returned insolvent, and it is for the legislature to consider whether it would not be better to repeal the amerciment law entirely, and lay a tax on original writs, to be paid in cash at the time the writ issues.

The agent would also suggest, that the revenue collected by the county clerks and sheriffs ought to be paid into the treasury at least once in every six months, and that a law should be passed enforcing the speedy payment of public monies; and if this is done now, the old accounts being generally closed or in a fair train for settlement, the appointment of an agent for the collection of debts which may hereafter become due, will not be necessary.

There was some difference of opinion, even among the first legal characters in the state, as to the powers of the agent; but having been by the act of 1821, invested with the same powers given to the agent by the act of 1816, which powers had been exercised by former agents, and having given a bond, with approved security, for sixty thousand dollars, and having taken an oath to do his duty, his course was clear and plain, and whatever might be the construction of the law, he was determined that no public officer in his district, who was a collector of the public monies, should have any excuse for not settling up his accounts at the time specified by law. True it is, that on his last tour through the different counties, his expenses exceed his commission, as few of the public officers were prepared to settle their accounts, but some of them have since done so and their accounts will generally be settled, and the balances paid, before the end of the present session.

In addition to the sum reported as having been paid to the treasurer by sundry persons, a sum exceeding six thousand dollars has been received from the clerk of Baltimore county since the session commenced. This amount had been remitted by mail on the 11th November, but never came to hand; and there are some other monies which will be in the treasury in a few days, which the agent will notice in a second report. He also, in compliance with the provisions of the act of 1816, will make a report of the balances due to the state.

The agent will here also take the liberty of remarking, that as some cases of a very important nature, involving constitutional questions, will soon occur, and as the state generally comes into court under one particular disadvantage, the small legal fees given to her attorney not being sufficient to compensate men of eminent legal talents for their attention to cases of great importance, which sometimes occupy several days, that a discretionary power might safely be lodged with the executive department, to employ counsel in cases where they think the interest of the state render it necessary.

Having been elected a delegate from Washington county to the present legislature, and as doubts might exist whether the appointment of agent could be held by a member of the legislature, to put an end to all doubt and difficulty on the subject, the agent handed in his resignation to the governor and council, before he qualified as a member of the house of delegates. All which is respectfully submitted,

THOMAS KENNEDY.

Which was read.

The house adjourns until to-morrow morning 9 o'clock.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1822.

The house met. Present the same members as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read.

Mr. Allen reports a bill, entitled, An act to alter and amend the constitution so that members of the senate may be hereafter elected immediately by the people; which was read.

The bill to enable Emanuel Venor, of Caroline county, to hold real property, was read the second time, passed, and returned to the senate.

The bill for the support of George Buckler, of Saint Mary's county, was read the second time passed, and sent to the senate.

On motion by Mr. Allen, leave given to bring in a bill, entitled, An act to regulate divorces.— Ordered, that Messrs. Allen, Douglass and Sheredine, report the same.

On motion by Mr. Millard, the following resolution was read: