

The agent is of opinion, that the amount of invalid debts would be considerably diminished, if a just settlement and adjustment of them could take place. But this is probably impracticable, from the length of time the debts have been due, the death of debtors, and various other circumstances. The amount, however, which is justly due, and which has been irrecoverably lost, is beyond doubt very large, and would in all probability, if it had been punctually collected, have now composed a capital from which the state might derive an annual revenue of more than twenty thousand dollars.

The lesson taught by these losses, and the annual accumulations of debt, now deemed valid, but which from delay may soon become otherwise, will be valuable, if it should induce the legislature to adopt an efficient system of collection. The agent, whose fidelity and indefatigable zeal in the public service, are abundantly manifest from the reports, which your committee have examined, is well qualified by experience to point out the defects in our collection system, and the necessary remedies. He has communicated to them much valuable information, of which they have availed themselves in framing a bill, which in a late report on the state of the finances, they have recommended to the adoption of the house. Your committee are of opinion, with the agent, that the revenue arising from licenses to retailers of spirituous liquors, hawkers and pedlars licenses, and licenses to retail at horse races, would be much more punctually, and with less risk, collected by the county clerks than by the sheriffs, and in conformity to his suggestion herewith report a bill for making that change.

When the present agent for the western shore was first appointed in February 1822, the total amount of valid debts, then due the state from county clerks and sheriffs, was about \$30,000; of these he has collected and paid into the treasury \$21,099 61, of which sum he collected during the last year \$2658 34. Since his second appointment as agent in May 1823, he has received only \$275 93, a sum less than his actual expenses, while engaged in the execution of his duties, having in that period made two complete tours through the counties of the western shore, and made no charge for travelling expenses, stationary, postage, or any other incidental expenses. Besides the above mentioned sums, he collected and paid into the treasury the sum of \$8201 77 of revenue, which accrued after his appointment, and upon which he had received no commission. He also adjusted the accounts of clerks and sheriffs in all counties where they were prepared for settlement, for debts which became due in 1822, for which he received no compensation. The general assembly by resolution No. 13, passed in 1822, released the securities of Gustavus Scott from the payment of \$1596 66. This debt might have been recovered, and the agent opposed the release, being a member of the house of delegates at the time, having previously commenced a suit, and he has since, by purchasing some lands belonging to the estate of said Gustavus Scott, which were sold for taxes in Allegany county, secured the greater part of the debt. For this also, he has received no compensation; your committee, however, think him justly entitled to it.

The agent also obtained judgment against Caleb Merryman for \$1397 47, which the legislature, by an act in 1822, chapter 63, released. As this was a hard case, the agent also voluntarily gave up his commission. The legislature has, by various resolutions, indulged debtors to the amount of about \$7000; in part of these cases suits had been commenced. Your committee recommend, that the agent be authorized to secure to the state either by purchase, or such other manner as he may think best, six hundred other acres, which he has reported as belonging to Gustavus Scott, and thereafter sell the same; and for this purpose they recommend the adoption of a resolution annexed to this report. Your committee beg leave to remark that the average amount received for services by the agents who were appointed previous to the present agent, was \$2500 per annum. Had the present agent received commissions upon all the sums mentioned in this report, upon which he has received no compensation, in addition to those which he has received, his compensation would amount to little more than one half of the annual compensation received by all other agents. It is due to the present agent to state, that he has not made any claim for commissions on debts which the legislature may have released, or for extra services; but they deem it but justice to state, that he appears to have taken uncommon pains, and to have manifested great assiduity and ability, in the execution of his office, and to promote the public interest, to have been ever ready to exceed rather than fall short of his prescribed duties. They therefore feel it to be justly due to him to recommend the adoption of the following resolution.

Resolved, That the treasurer of the western shore be directed to pay to Thomas Kennedy or order, the sum of _____ as additional compensation for services rendered in his office as agent for the western shore of Maryland, since his appointment in May 1823.

By order,

TRUFMAN CROSS Clk.

Mr. Cromwell presents a petition from Jacob Poe, of Frederick county, praying to be permitted to lease and exchange certain property therein mentioned; referred to Messrs. Cromwell, Barnes and Kemp.

The house, according to the order of the day, proceeded to the second reading of the bill to alter and change all such parts of the constitution and form of government as relates to the election of delegates to the general assembly of this state.

On motion by Mr. Carroll, the question was put, That the same be referred to the 1st June next?

After some time spent in discussing the merits of the bill,

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

FRIDAY, January 28. 1825.

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

Mr. Cromwell reports a bill, entitled, An act for the benefit of the devisees of George Poe, deceased.

Mr. Hoffman delivers the following report:

The committee to whom was referred the petition of Thomas Stallings, and others, securities of Thomas Pollard, late sheriff of Allegany county, have had the same under consideration and ask leave to report.—That in the opinion of your committee, this is one of those uncommon cases which requires the