

Resolved, That the governor and council, in making said contracts, be governed by the rate of charges allowed by law to the present register in chancery, for similar services.

Mr. Chapman, from the committee of grievances and courts of justice, delivers the following report:

The committee of grievances and courts of justice, in obedience to an order of the house of delegates, requiring them to enquire of the several judges of the county courts, whether the records in their several clerk's offices have been completed, pursuant to the provisions of the act of 1817, chapter 119, ask leave to report—That the committee addressed a circular to the several judges of the county courts, as required by the order requesting information from them, how far the provisions of the act of 1817 had been complied with, and have received answers from all the judges in the state, with one or two exceptions, and as the communications received, conveyed to your committee the information required, they did not deem it necessary to resort to the other process pointed out in the order to obtain additional statements from those judges who have not answered the inquiries made of them. The subject of judgment records is one peculiarly important to every class of individuals in society; for, unfortunately for the people of the state, upon this species of records hang the titles to a large amount of real property, and if those judgments, which are required to be recorded by the act of 1817, should be neglected, and the papers and proceedings lost or destroyed, a confusion will be introduced into the land titles of the state, alike prejudicial to the interest of individuals, and destructive of the peace of society. It gives your committee much pleasure to observe, how sensible the judges in most of the districts appear to have been of this fact, and to remark that in most cases, orders were passed, in conformity with the provisions of the act of 1817. In the first judicial district, it appears from a minute and satisfactory statement received from the honourable John Rousby Plater, that orders were passed by the court at the spring terms of 1818, requiring the provisions of the act of assembly to be carried into effect, by the several clerks of the courts in that district; and it further appears, that the records of Saint Mary's county court, are completed up to the last term of the court, and the minutes of the court recorded up to a period in 1825; that they have not been quite completed, in consequence of a disappointment in procuring proper blank books. As it appears from the communication of judge Plater, that the records of that court are in a great state of forwardness, and that the clerk has been prevented from completing them, by unavoidable circumstances, the committee recommend the adoption of a resolution herewith reported, allowing him further time. It is due to that officer to say, that he has not asked this additional time to complete his records, and he may, by this period, have finished them. Yet, as the attorney-general has been instructed to institute proceedings against delinquent clerks, and altho' the clerk of Saint Mary's county court has his records up within a few months of the time prescribed by the order of the court, the adoption of this resolution may be necessary to prevent, in this case, unnecessary litigation. It further appears from the communication of judge Plater, that the records of Charles county court are not in a state of such forwardness; but as there is now a memorial from the clerk of that county before your committee, it will form the subject of another report. Your committee have also received a communication from the honourable John Stephen, chief judge of the first judicial district; and it appears, from this communication, to your