

C H A P.

I.

recorded therein are entirely lost; to the great prejudice of those concerned, and a great part of such as remain are so very much worn and damaged, that without a speedy care is taken for their amendment, it is like to prove of very ill and dangerous consequences to the inhabitants of this province in general, the most valuable part of their estates entirely depending thereon; and forasmuch as the bad circumstances of the records of the land, secretary's and commissary's offices, are owing, as well to the damages they sustained by transporting them from St. Mary's, to this city, as to the negligence of the several officers and clerks that have hitherto been intrusted therewith, and the want of good and sufficient books at first, they not being under any obligation or penalty to find such books; or to keep them in due repair, notwithstanding they have received the full profits and benefits of the several offices they were intrusted with; for remedy whereof for the future, and that the records of the several offices as aforesaid, that stand in need of any amendments and reparations, may be speedily and sufficiently amended and repaired, in the best manner that is possible, at the charge of the public and respective counties, and that after such reparations as aforesaid, the several officers and clerks that shall from time to time be intrusted with any the several records aforesaid, and shall reap the profits and benefits of such their offices, be obliged to find good and sufficient books for the future, and look after and maintain the record books committed to their care, in such order and reparation, from time to time, as they shall receive them,

Commissioners
appointed, &c.

II. BE IT ENACTED, by the right honourable the Lord Proprietary, by and with the advice and consent of his Lordship's Governor, and the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly, and by the authority of the same, That lieutenant-colonel Samuel Young, Mr. Joseph Hill, Mr. Benjamin Tasker, and Mr. John Beale, or any two or three of them, be and are hereby authorized, empowered and appointed, commissioners to inspect into the several decays and defects of all the records of the land, secretary and commissary's offices, and to judge of the necessary amendments and reparations thereof, and to employ such clerks, book-binders, or other persons, as appear needful to them for the completing and perfecting the amendments and reparations they shall adjudge necessary, and to contract and agree, on the behalf of the public, with all such persons by them employed in that service, on the best and easiest terms they can, for such sum or sums of tobacco as they shall adjudge the several persons for their several services may deserve, which sums of tobacco agreed on as aforesaid shall be paid by the public to the several persons to whom the same become due.

After three
months, the se-
cretary, &c.
shall not take
upon them-
selves the keep-
ing the records,
&c.

III. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, by the authority aforesaid, by and with the advice and consent aforesaid, That after the expiration of three months, which shall first happen after the reparations and amendment of the records aforesaid are made, according to the design of this act, and the true intent and meaning of such agreement as shall be made by the commissioners hereby authorized and required to make the same, it shall not be lawful for the secretary, commissary, their deputies, officers or under-clerks, who shall have the keeping of the land, secretary's or commissary's records committed to them, to take upon themselves the keeping of any of the said records, or to receive and apply to their use any of the fees, profits or benefits arising from their several offices, until such secretary, or his deputies, or commissary-general, have entered into bond, with two good and sufficient securities, in the name of the lord proprietary, before two of the justices of the provincial court; that is to say, the (a) secretary or his deputies for the land, chancery and provincial records, in the sum of one thousand pounds current money, and the commissary for the records in the commissary's office in the sum of one thousand pounds current money, all which bonds shall be conditioned as follows, viz.

(a) By 1742, ch. 10, section 2, the secretary's bond for the provincial office shall be for three thousand pounds current money, the register in chancery one thousand pounds, the commissary-general for the commissary's office three thousand pounds, the register of the land-office three thousand pounds currency.

" The condition of this above written obligation is such, That if the above bound —, whilst he
" shall continue in the office of —, shall, at his own proper cost and charge, find a supply of good
" and sufficient record books, necessary for the entering up of all matters and things relating to such
" — office, and shall duly and carefully look after, preserve and maintain all the several books of
" records now being and remaining in the said office, as also those that from time to time shall be
" added thereto, in such manner, as that when — shall be dismissed from officiating longer in the
" said office, shall deliver all the aforesaid records to the next person that succeeds in the said office,
" in good order and repair, according to the true intent and meaning of the act of assembly in that
" case made and provided, that then the above written obligation is to be void and of no effect,
" otherwise to remain in full force and virtue in law; the which bond being so entered into, and
" taken by two justices of the provincial court as aforesaid, they shall immediately call before them the
" witnesses to said bond or bonds, and cause a probat thereof to be made before them, which they shall
" endorse, or cause to be endorsed, on the back of the said bond or bonds, with order immediately to
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