

"The committee to whom was referred the representation of the judges of the high court of appeals, report, that they have taken the same into consideration, and find, that the constitution and form of government of this state does not provide that the court of appeals should be constituted of any fixed number of judges, and the constitution of the said court was left to the legislature of the state; that the general assembly, by a resolution passed at February session, 1777, directed, that the court should be constituted of five judges, with power to any three or more of them to hear and determine all appeals and writs of error from inferior jurisdictions; that five judges were accordingly appointed and commissioned, and they continued to act until the death of James Murray, Esquire, one of the judges, which happened some time in the year 1783 or 1784.

"That the general assembly, (by letter, as the committee are informed, but which they now cannot find,) directed the governor and council not to fill any vacancy in the said court until the number of judges should be reduced below the number three; that some time afterwards Solomon Wright, Esquire, another of the judges of the said court, died, and the power and authority of the said court being originally given to five judges, or any three or more of them, the attendance of all three is required to pass any judgment or decree.

"The committee, with respect to that part of the representation of the said judges relative to the number of which the court should be constituted, do not see the necessity of increasing the number. They are of opinion, that the court of appeals should be composed of three judges, with power and authority to any two of them to determine in all cases of appeal.

"The committee are also of opinion, that the court ought to be vested by law with all the power and authority which the judges of the general court have, as to the enforcing the execution of their process, and punishing for contempts; and that the judges ought to have power to appoint a messenger or crier to said court."

Your committee further find by the votes and proceedings of said last session, that leave was given, and a committee appointed, to bring in a bill to carry into effect that part of the report so concurred with, which bill, for some reason unknown to this committee, never was introduced; and this committee are of opinion, that it will be proper and expedient that an act now pass, to grant such powers to said court as were contemplated at the last session in the report above recited. The committee are further of opinion, that it is a proper mark of respect to the supreme court, that they should be furnished with a copy of the votes and proceedings of the legislature for each member thereof; but the committee being informed, that a resolution has already passed the house, directing the said votes and proceedings to be sent to every person now entitled to receive a copy of the laws, at the public expense, they are of opinion that the court of appeals is included in the said resolution.

All which is submitted to the house.

By order,

A. GOLDER, clk.

Which was read the first and second time, concurred with, and leave given to bring in a bill pursuant thereto. ORDERED, That Mr. Sprigg, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Winchester, Mr. Digges and Mr. Key, be a committee to prepare and bring in the same.

Mr. Ridgely, from the committee, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following report:

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of Hannah Sater, of Baltimore county, report, that they have examined the matters stated in the said petition, and find that the petitioner's mill and property, from which she derived a support for a large family of children, was consumed by fire in the month of May last, and that in consequence thereof her family are dependent upon the charity of her neighbours; that no inconvenience whatsoever appears to your committee will result from granting the prayer of the petition, and in a case so strongly supported by the petitioners distress, they submit the propriety of granting leave to hold a lottery for raising the sum of two thousand dollars. All which is submitted to the house.

By order,

J. O'BRYON, 3d. clk.

Which was read.

A petition from Samuel Abell, collector of the county tax of Saint-Mary's county, praying a further time to complete his collection, was preferred, read, and referred to Mr. Hopewell, Mr. Oneale and Mr. Hebb, to consider and report thereon.

Mr. Mackall, from the committee, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following report:

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of William F. Lewis, of Calvert county, having considered the same, with the vouchers therewith exhibited, beg leave to report, that he served nine months as a soldier in the Maryland line during the late revolution, for which the committee are of opinion he has received no compensation. The committee further report, that on the late requisition of the president of the United States to quell the insurrection to the westward, he turned out voluntarily, without one shilling bounty, and while on that expedition got his arm broken, as stated in his petition, by which he is unable to carry on his trade for some time. The committee are of opinion, that from the particular circumstances of his case he deserves the encouragement and benevolence of his country, and submit the following resolution:

RESOLVED, That the treasurer of the western shore pay unto William Francis Lewis, or order, the sum of sixty dollars, as a compensation for his services.

All which is submitted to the house.

By order,

J. O'BRYON, 3d. clk.

Which was read.

Mr. Winchester, from the committee, brings in and delivers to Mr. Speaker the following report:

THE committee to whom was referred the petition of John Cox, of Queen-Anne's county, report, that they have considered the same, and find the following facts: That the petitioner's father