

its pecuniary transactions with its citizens as early as practicable, and reduce its finances to the simple receipts of fines, forfeitures, marriage, ordinary and retailers licences, the land-office income, and annual interest arising on the funded debt.

The agent reports, that since the last session of assembly there has been a decision in favour of the state in four cases in chancery, where injunctions had been obtained by purchasers of confiscated property, to the amount of £. 5800, that £. 1249 18 0, part thereof, has been received and accounted for, and in the course of a few months the balance may be reasonably calculated on; that other cases in chancery are still existing; which in the course of the ensuing year will most probably be settled, if equal diligence and industry is pursued.

That the confiscated property, to the probable amount of £. 5000, reported unsold by the agent at the last session of assembly, consisting of sundry tracts of land, claimed as late the property of Daniel Dulany, of Daniel, still remains undisposed of, the agent being advised to delay the sale thereof until possession of the lands were obtained by the state in due course of law, and for recovery of which three suits have been instituted in the general court, and are at this time depending.

The agent, agreeably to law, caused notice to be given in the public newspapers of this state to the discoverers of confiscated property, to produce, by the first day of August last, the title papers of the lands by them respectively discovered, that the same might be laid before the attorney-general for his opinion, but in no instance was the requisition complied with by the discoverers aforesaid, and consequently the opinion of the attorney-general could not be obtained.

The agent suggests to the wisdom of the legislature the propriety of some ultimate decision on the subject of informations of confiscated property; many informations exist in his office, which have the double operation of lessening the value of such property in the hands of the possessors, to the injury of the citizens, and of holding up delusive funds, which are not likely, unless acted on, to be ever beneficial to the state.

The agent suggests the propriety of vesting a discretionary power in some person or persons to compromise with the purchasers of sundry lots in Beatty and Hawkins addition to George-town, heretofore sold by the state, a late determination of the general court, as to that property, being likely to involve the purchasers, and state, in considerable embarrassment and controversy, if some such measure is not adopted.

The agent has lately discovered certain small slips or gores of land, in no case exceeding twenty acres, lying in Saint-Mary's, Baltimore, and other counties, contiguous to property heretofore sold, most of it of little value, and not sufficient to defray the expence of advertising and of a public sale, and the trouble and delay of taking bonds under the sixth section of the act to appoint an agent for the year 1797, but which slips of land might be sold at a fair valuation for cash, if the agent had competent authority; the probable amount of property thus circumstanced would be about £. 150.

The agent reports, that but one case of compromise has arisen under the tenth section of the act to appoint an agent for the year 1797. A certain Peter Wintz had purchased of the state sixty acres of land in the reserves of Baltimore county, and passed his bond for £. 11 5 0, the amount of the purchase money; suit was brought against him on the said bond, but on examination of the circumstances of the case, and a correct and accurate survey of the land being made out, it was clearly ascertained that 32½ acres of the land sold him was foul of elder lands, wherefore the agent, with the approbation of the Governor and Council, annulled the contract and took back the property, the said Wintz being a very poor man, nothing was demanded of him, which property, amounting to 27½ acres, remains on hand undisposed of, by reason of this transaction taking place and being closed on the 12th day of October last.

All which is submitted.

WILLIAM MARBURY, Agent.

November 8, 1797.

Which was read, and referred to Mr. Key, Mr. Godman, Mr. Rackliff, Mr. Taney, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Brown and Mr. Worthington, to consider and report thereon.

ORDERED, That the printer to the state strike one hundred copies of said report for the use of the members of this house.

A petition from Benjamin Deshamel, of Queen-Anne's county, praying an act of insolvency, was preferred, read, and referred to the committee appointed on petitions of a similar nature.

A petition from Matthew Hawkins, and others, securities of Thomas O'Bryon, a former sheriff of Queen-Anne's county, praying an act may pass to extend the time authorising them to collect the balances due to the said sheriff, was preferred, read, and referred to Mr. Nicholson, Mr. C. Frazier and Mr. Emory, to consider and report thereon.

A petition from Robert Walters and William Diamond, of Queen-Anne's county, securities of Thomas O'Bryon, a former sheriff of said county, praying an act may pass authorising them to collect balances due to the said sheriff, was preferred, read, and referred to the committee on the petition of Matthew Hawkins, and others.

A petition from John Clawson, and others, of Queen-Anne's county, proprietors of lands lying on Unicorn Branch, praying an act may pass for cutting a ditch to drain the said branch, was preferred, read, and referred to the committee on the petition of Matthew Hawkins, and others.

A petition from Philemon Charles Blake, late sheriff of Queen-Anne's county, praying that the time limited by law for the collection of officers fees, &c. may be extended, was preferred, read, and referred to the committee on the petition of Matthew Hawkins, and others.

A petition from sundry inhabitants of Queen-Anne's county, praying an act may pass for the destruction of crows and squirrels, was preferred, read, and referred to Mr. Quynn, Mr. Calvert and Mr. Kerlaner, to consider and report thereon.

A petition from the select vestry of Saint Paul's parish, lying in Talbot and Queen-Anne's counties, praying an act may pass to authorise a lottery to raise a sum of money for the purchase of a glebe, was preferred.