

that several were re-enactments of laws, which were about to expire, passed at previous sessions with similar limitations as to time.

Several desirable laws failed of passage because of disagreement between the two houses. The Upper House, composed of the Governor and Council and therefore under the direct influence of the Proprietary, was often at loggerheads with the majority of the members of the Lower House. Although party lines were not always sharply defined the majority in the Lower House at this period was of what was known as the County party, and was generally to be found, in matters involving political principles or taxation, in opposition to the influential but small group in this same House which was more or less closely allied to the ruling hierarchy, known as the Proprietary party, which completely dominated the Upper House. But divisions in the Lower House did not always follow strictly these party lines for we often find the more conservative members of the County party voting with the Proprietary group against measures favored by the more radical members of the popular party.

A bill emanating from the Lower House, imposing a license upon hawkers, pedlars, and petty chapmen, caused a sharp division between the County and Proprietary parties. It was passed by the Lower House, but was rejected in the Upper House because of the latter's insistence that the license fees and fines should go to the Proprietary, while the Lower House was determined that these should go to the support of the county where they were imposed. Several local bills such as those restricting domestic animals from running at large and providing greater protection against fire in the construction of chimneys, seemed to have been rejected because the Upper House insisted that the fines for their violation should go to the Proprietary. A bill reducing the allowances to members of both houses of the Assembly was rejected by the Upper House. A bill to encourage the West India trade was likewise rejected by the Upper House, because under its terms the payment of commissions to the Naval Officers, appointees of the Proprietary, on the duties collected, was jeopardized.

The session came to an end June 23d and was prorogued until the following October, but the Assembly did not meet in October as it was again prorogued by Tasker until December, then successively to February 1753, to May, to July, and to August, and finally to October of that year when it at last met. These successive prorogations were ordered by Tasker to delay the meeting until the arrival of the new governor.

The session which met October 2, 1753, a few weeks after the arrival of Governor Sharpe, was soon to show him that there were difficulties in the way of his dealings with the Lower House. When the session opened Sharpe presented an address to the Assembly from Frederick, the Lord Proprietary,