The 12th section gives to the register of the eastern shore land office a power, not possessed by the register on the western shore, of issuing subpoenas to summon parties to appear (before the judge of the said office) to maintain or answer caveats, or to require the attendance of witnesses, and also to issue attachments for contempt against witnesses not attending. It will be recollected that general regulations upon this subject, although I have not yet given them in detail, were prescribed by the act of 1782, ch. 38. According to these, all process necessary for bringing disputes in the land office to hearing and decision was to issue from the chancery, or from the general court of either shore. When, by the provisions of the law under consideration, disputes of this kind arising on the eastern shore were to be there heard and decided, it became necessary to furnish the judge with the means of compelling the attendance of parties and witnesses :—this might have been effected by a provision authorising the issue of subpoenas from the general court of the eastern shore on the requisition of the judge or the register of the land office ; but as the judge of the western shore office, being the chancellor, has in his own person, though in another character, the power of summoning, of enforcing attendance, and of punishing contempts, without the necessity of recourse to a foreign jurisdiction, it was perhaps thought more equal that the judge of the land office on the eastern shore, or the register in his name, should have the same power. In the consideration however of a (c) question which might arise whether the land office is or is not a *court* of record, the offices of the two shores would certainly stand on different ground in consequence of this regulation.

By an act of 1796, ch. 6, remedies were provided for some inconveniences arising to the inhabitants of the eastern shore from the regulations of the preceding acts.—Certificates it

(c) Such a question has actually been raised, and opposite opinions have been pronounced on it by the two persons in their time the most competent to judge of the nature of the establishment. When engaged in the management of internal revenues of the United States, I had occasion to know that exemplifications under seal were given from the western shore land office on paper not stamped, and I signified to Mr. Callehan that I held the exemplifications to be liable to the stamp duty. The return which he made to this intimation, was a written statement and argument, tending to shew that the land office was not a court, and I acquiesced in his construction. The late chancellor on the contrary seems in his evidence given before the general court, in the case of Hammond vs. Norris, relative to the practice of the land office, to consider the said office as a court, though wanting the power of fine and imprisonment, which he apparently views as not essential to that character. The eastern shore office has powers approaching very nearly to what are comprehended in those terms, and would in all likelihood have been confidently pronounced a court if its organization had been in view when the chancellor was giving the evidence in question.