

limits of the act abovementioned. I shall now return to the acts relating expressly to the subject of escheat, in order to notice as briefly as I can the provisions not yet examined.

The power given by the act of 1780, ch. 51, to the commissioners of confiscated property in respect to escheat lands were temporary, and have already been sufficiently noticed: the mode of payment prescribed in that act was also a temporary provision, being permitted to be in money, bills of credit, or crop tobacco, payable within certain terms therein specified. The commissioners, it will be recollected, were authorised to direct warrants to be issued from the land office to the discoverers of escheat lands, giving a preference to those who had already applied at the said office for the preemption, and to subsequent discoverers according to the order of their applications. The principle however was established by this act, though modified afterwards, as has been mentioned, by that of 1801, of receiving for escheats two thirds of the value thereof, which it was directed should be returned with a specification of the quality of the land, by the surveyors, and revised and adjusted by the aforesaid commissioners. Upon default of payment the land was to be subject to new applications.

By the act of 1781, ch. 20, besides the repeal of the aforesaid power of the commissioners, and the general authority given to the registers of the land office to grant warrants for the re-surveying, proclaiming, or *escheating* lands within the counties of their respective shores, it was ordained that the purchase money on all escheats should be paid within one year from the date of the warrant, after which, warrants might be issued to new applicants. What concerns the preference to be given to applicants, in proper hours for the transaction of business, has been already noticed, and although placed in the section which regulates escheats, has relation to warrants in general. The only remaining matter relating to this subject which is found in the act under consideration is a direction that the value in current money of all escheat lands and improvements thereon shall be returned and certified by the surveyor on oath at the time of returning his certificate of survey, and that the treasurer shall finally ascertain the value thereof and receive the money from the party. The same provision is made in respect to the Eastern shore by the act of 1795, ch. 61.

It has been mentioned that provision was made for the benefit of the creditors of persons whose lands had or might become escheat; likewise in behalf of those who might have claims by lien or contract, on the estates of such persons; and also for the benefit of certain foreigners. I shall notice