

At a SESSION of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of MARYLAND, begun and held at the city of ANNAPOLIS, on Friday the thirty-first of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-seven, and ended the 3d day of December : The following laws were enacted.

THOMAS JOHNSON, Esq; Governor.

C H A P. I.

An ACT to punish certain crimes.

Persons de-  
stroying ma-  
gazines, &c.  
to suffer  
death.

**B**E it enacted, by the general assembly of Maryland, That if any subject or inhabitant of this state shall, within or without this state, and if any person shall, within this state, wilfully and maliciously burn or destroy, or attempt or conspire to burn or destroy, any magazine of provisions, or of military or naval stores, belonging to this state, or the United States, or any of them; and if any person shall wilfully and maliciously burn or destroy, or attempt or conspire to burn or destroy, or shall wilfully betray, or voluntarily yield or deliver, or attempt or conspire to betray, yield or deliver, to the enemy, any vessel belonging to the United States, or to this or any other of the United States, or to any subject of this or any other of the United States, and shall be thereof convicted in the general court of this state, or shall stand mute, or peremptorily challenge above the number twenty of the pannel, such person, his aider or abettor, shall suffer death as a felon without benefit of clergy.

C H A P. II.

An ACT to continue an act for enlarging the powers of the governor and the council.

C H A P. III.

A Supplement to an act, entitled, An act to unite the free-schools of Saint-Mary's, Charles, and Prince-George's counties.

The majority of any seven of the trustees are empowered to transact any business which the whole before this act might have done.

C H A P. IV.

An ACT to procure cloathing for the quota of this state of the American army.

The situation of public affairs at the time of passing this act, and several prior and subsequent acts of a nature similar to this, will not perhaps, in the opinion of posterity, justify such measures. It will be natural for men in the bosom of peace to view them as the arbitrary acts of tyranny and oppression; but the facility with which they were executed, the cheerfulness with which they were submitted to, and the valuable purposes which they answered, have evinced to us that they were equally necessary, politic and wise.

By this act the governor and the council are required to appoint an officer in each county, who is authorized to choose any number of assistants, whose powers shall be extensive as his own. His business is to collect blankets and certain specified articles of cloathing, of which the army are in extreme want. This is to be done by purchasing at prices (not exceeding such as shall be limited by the executive) to be fixed either by agreement of the parties, or by the judgment of an appraiser, to be chosen by the collector. If the articles cannot be bought, the officer may seize them wherever he can find them, provided he shall think they may be spared by the proprietor; excepting, however, blankets belonging to a tavern, or a lodging house. He may even tender an oath, or affirmation, to any person respecting such articles in his possession, and upon a refusal of the party to take the oath, he is, under the penalty of £. 5, to inform his county court, and the offender is subjected to a fine of £. 500.

Any man appointed by the executive to this office, for refusing or neglecting to act, is liable to a forfeiture of £. 50. His allowance for his services is a commission of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and the reasonable expence of conveying the articles to the order of the executive. He is not to be furnished with money for making purchases, but a certificate signed by him, or signed by his assistant and countersigned by him, of the purchase or seizure, and the value of the article, is to be discharged by either treasurer, or discounted by the sheriff out of the public assessment due by the grantee.

C H A P. V.

An ACT to enable the surviving visitors of Cæcil county free-school to fill up the vacancies for visitors in said school.

Such of them as are willing to act shall, with all convenient speed, choose other visitors to make up the number four. And, when duly qualified, these four may exercise all the powers of visitors of free-schools.

C H A P.