

The difference which the law designed to make between the "Retail Liquor License," (or the license to sell in quantities *not less than a pint*), and the "Ordinary License," (the license to sell in quantities *less than a pint*), in many portions of the State, is practically disregarded; the *Store-keeper* and *Shop-keeper*, without professing to open, set up, or keep an "Ordinary," apply for and receive the Ordinary License.

The preliminary oath required of the applicant for license, by the Act of 1856, is a most excellent provision; but great inconvenience would be saved persons living remote from the Clerk's office if the law should be so amended as to allow the oath to be administered by a Justice of the Peace.

The recommendation of my predecessor that authority be given the Comptroller to substitute a *stamp* for his signature upon licenses furnished the Clerks by this office is hereby renewed. By such a provision the interest of the State could not possibly suffer, and much useless labor would be dispensed with.

It is gratifying to bear testimony to the promptness and efficiency manifested by the Clerks of the various Courts in connection with this Department; but the Comptroller regrets to state that the late Clerk of the Circuit Court for Caroline County cannot be included in this number.

During the fiscal years 1856 and 1857, no payments were made by him into the Treasury. His accounts, properly certified, were from time to time sent to the State's Attorney for that county, with instructions to institute immediate suit, and, in the language of the law, "to prosecute with diligence and effect." But these instructions were not complied with, and the promises of settlement repeatedly made by the State's Attorney on behalf of the Clerk were not verified. At length the Comptroller deemed it his duty, under the Act of Assembly of 1854, ch. 196, to bring the subject to the notice of the Grand Jury of that County; their action with regard to the matter has not been authoritatively learned.

It is evident that the State would be benefitted by the passage of a law authorizing the Comptroller in cases of this kind to place the accounts of defaulters in the hands of some