

Attorney of this Court", whereupon Thomas Notley, who was present, being given the necessary authority by Gunby, the matter was put through in good technical legal fashion (pp. 423-424).

CONTEMPT.

Failure to show sufficient respect for those in authority or to carry out their orders, resulted in the offender being brought before the court by a writ of contempt. Thus Daniel Johnson upon the complaint of Henry Adams, High Sheriff of Charles County, was summoned before the April, 1666, court by a "speciall warr^t for an contempt to the governm^t" issued by the Governor "shewne in takeing away his horse after the s^d sherriffe had prest it for the publicques use and Service" and was fined 500 pounds of tobacco (p. 79). This was doubtless a military requisition made by the sheriff. At the October, 1666, court four prominent planters, Joseph Harrison, James Lindsey, John Lewger, and Thomas Allanson, gave security to appear before the next Provincial Court "to answer the Contempt made by them ag^t the Leiutenn^t Generalls power given and granted to Cap^t william Boreman As Command^r of the foott Company", doubtless for the violation of muster regulations (p. 128).

There are four instances in which public officials were assaulted while in the performance of their public duties, in which this contempt for authority made a mere breach of the peace a much more serious matter. Three of these were assaults upon sheriffs and one upon a county justice. They are all described in some detail elsewhere in this introduction in discussing the criminal cases which came before the Provincial Court. We find two assaults, by different individuals, upon Richard Collett, High Sheriff of Charles County, who may have died of the injuries he received in the second assault (pp. xxxii-xxxiii, 198, 199, 244, 312, 607). The assault upon Richard Tilghman, High Sheriff of Talbot County, in which he received humiliating treatment, was not without humorous features (pp. xxxiii-xxxiv, 453). In the case of the assault upon Thomas Besson, one of the justices of Anne Arundel County, not only the justice but a constable, were attacked (pp. xxxiv, 309-310).

Reflections upon the honor or dignity of the justices of the provincial, or county courts, or upon the attorneys practicing before them, were punishable by the bench, and traducers were also liable to suits for defamation. Thus Thomas Sprigg of Resurrection Manor, Calvert County, and a justice of that county, who was represented by William Calvert as his attorney, at the April, 1666, Provincial Court sued Raymond Staplefort, a merchant of Calvert, for scandal and defamation in having openly in the Calvert County Court falsely, scandalously, and maliciously charged Sprigg with being confederate with a litigant, John Balley, in a suit between Staplefort and Balley, that was being heard before that court of which Sprigg was then a justice. Sprigg recited his honorable record, without suspicion of bribery or perjury, both as a justice and as a former sheriff of Calvert. He declared that he had been put to an expense of £500 to clear his good name, and now brought suit against the defamer to vindicate himself. Staplefort's attorney, John Morecroft, demurred in law, on the ground "that whosoever informeth on behalf of the