

ways and means, as to his Excellency shall seem proper, whether a Solicitor, who has so conducted himself, be a fit person to remain a practitioner in the Courts of this Colony; and at the same time to express to his Excellency, its regret, that it should be requisite to suggest to him an investigation which is equally painful and necessary.

That your Committee has examined evidence at great length on the state of the Court of Chancery, during the period of the administration of the Government by Lieut. Governor Smith; and more particularly during the period that his son-in-law Mr. Ambrose Lane, Town Major of Charlotte Town, has filled the offices of Registrar, Master and Examiner, of that Court; and your Committee has in the course of its examination, received satisfactory proof, that since the appointment of the last mentioned gentleman, to these offices, very great and excessive fees have been taken by that officer in that Court, contrary to Law; and that the taking such excessive fees, has been sanctioned by Lieut. Governor Smith; and not only so, but your Committee has had clear evidence laid before it, of various instances where the said Mr. Lane, hath in the office of Registrar, acted oppressively, with the view of obtaining excessive and unlawful fees, and wherein he has succeeded in obtaining such fees; and this Committee cannot omit to name the cases of Alexander vs. Rankin, Alexander vs. Collins, Alexander vs. Fulton, and Lord James Townshend vs. Abell, as instances where unlawful courses were taken to obtain such unlawful fees.

Your Committee have further to notice, that even on the supposition that the fees authorized by the late Chancellor Lieut. Governor Smith, to be taken by the Registrar of the Court of Chancery, contrary to Statute, were in themselves just and reasonable, that novel practices and charges were introduced into that Court, for no other purpose than to create fees to the said Registrar, to the great oppression of the suitors of that Court.

Your Committee has further to observe, that such unlawful fees and oppressive practices arose after the appointment of the said Mr. Lane to the said offices, and that the fees of Registrar alone after that period, experienced an advance in their rate of four hundred per cent over those of the gentleman who preceded him in the office.

Your Committee also feels it a duty to remark, that the said Mr. Lane is a subaltern in the Army, uneducated to the Law, and that supposing his conduct in these important offices of Master, Registrar and Examiner in Chancery, to have been as pure, as it is proved it has been otherwise, his want of legal education unfits him to hold such appointments; and if your Committee had ever entertained any doubt on this point, it would have been convinced by the various instances of that gentleman's incapacity to fill any of these offices, which was brought in evidence before it.

Your Committee has further to observe that from the earliest period of the Colony down to the appointment of Mr. Lane, none of these offices had been held, but by gentlemen regularly educated to the profession of the Law; and that the duties of Master, Examiner, and Registrar, had never been held by the same gentleman, and that the departure from this ancient course has been felt as a severe grievance by the Colony.

Your Committee feel it their duty to recommend to the House, that his Excellency the Lieut. Governor be advised and humbly requested in such time, and in such way and manner, as to his Excellency shall seem proper, to withdraw Mr. Lane's appointments in Chancery, and to name other and qualified officers to the offices of Master, Registrar, and Examiner in Chancery, and that in particular, the office of Master and Registrar may never be combined in the same person.

That it appears to your Committee, that in the month of October, in the year 1823, a prosecution was commenced in Chancery, against seven respectable individuals of Queen's County, for an alleged contempt of that Court, at the instigation and prosecution of the Hon. Ambrose Lane, Registrar, Master, and Examiner of that Court, by which the said seven persons were put to great inconvenience, loss and damage, and which was ultimately stayed, contrary to the wish of the Defendants, when the costs, to wit, those of the Registrar and his Solicitor, were paid out of the public Treasury of this Island, although the Chancellor in open Court, repeatedly declared the same was a private prosecution by an officer of the Court, thereby clearly shewing the extreme anxiety of the Chancellor Lieut. Governor Smith, to put fees in the pocket of the said Ambrose Lane. the Committee cannot avoid remarking, that using the public money for such a