

accounting, and allowed tobacco planters to discharge a part of their fees in money. The latter act, which continued these rates, was renewed for but one year, in 1769, and was allowed to expire on October 22, 1770.

This unfortunate loss of so valuable a law arose from a new disagreement over fees. Delegates now complained, not against the table in general, but against certain "abuses" in the fee system, some legal and some extra-legal. A new act for inspection alone, together with one for payment of the clergy, was passed in December, 1773. But the fee controversy, enlivened by Governor Eden's proclamation of 1770, by vigorous resolutions in the Lower House, and by a stirring newspaper correspondence, persisted, to become one of those issues which destroyed His Lordship's government.

✓ Thus the fees of officers in Maryland, early established at high figures, remained high throughout colonial times. Indeed the only effective reduction was that of 1719; for the act of 1725/6 was disallowed, and that of 1747 did not actually reduce the sterling values. Moreover, this law of 1719 retrenched the fees of only four offices. Those of all others went virtually unchanged from the beginning to the end.

✓ The level of fees was thus a constant factor among those variables which affected the revenues of office. Relatively constant also, though interrupted by war, was the increase of population and commerce. The price of tobacco and the effectiveness of collection, however, varied greatly, though both were improved by the Inspection Law of 1747. Although some developments favored and some impaired the interests of the office holder, their net effect was a gradual increase of office incomes throughout the colonial period, a progress interrupted but temporarily by the reductions of 1719, by the loss of fee acts in 1726 and 1770, and by the four intercolonial wars, of which the opening years of the fourth and last were most severe.