

Letter Bk. IV agreeable to both Law & Equity that such Fines be paid Let it be considered what Steps are to be taken in order to compel Heirs & Devisees to account for them to His Ldp's Agent. Now that His Ldp & you may be fully apprized of every thing relative to this Matter I must inform you that by what I can learn there never were any Alienation Fines paid by Heirs or Devisees to His Ldp's Ancestors or demanded by them from the first Settlement of the Country to the Year 1716 at which

p. 179 time an Act was made for granting the late Lord Baltimore a certain Duty on every Hhd of Tob^o exported as an Equivalent for & in lieu of all Quit Rents & Alienation Fines payable to His Ldp by the Landholders in this Province & such Equivalent did the late Lord Proprietary continue to receive till the End of the year 1733, when he was pleased to give Orders that the Quit Rents & Alienation Fines should be from that time demanded & received from each & every Tenant in the manner that hath been since pursued. The late M^r Dulany having in the year 1742 or thereabouts told the Ld prry that he thought His Ldp had by the Tenor of the Patents a Right to an Alienation Fine for every Tract of Land which should come to the possession of Heirs or Devisees, an Instruction was thereupon given to the Agent to demand & collect such Fines & to compel all Heirs & Devisees to make due payment but upon the people's exclaiming against such Instruction as a most grievous Oppression & refusing Payment, His Ldp thought fit to countermand the abovementioned Instruction & in order to quiet the Minds of the People he likewise directed M^r Bladen to issue the following Proclamation. " Maryland ss. By His Excellency Thomas Bladen Esq^r Governor & Commander in Chief in & over the Province of Maryland A Proclamation, Whereas some Uneasinesses have arisen concerning the Right of His Ldp the Ld Prry to Alienation Fines on Devises of Lands, & that His Ldp desirous to shew his Readiness to give his Tenants Ease & Satisfaction in whatever may be thought reasonable in any Degree tho to the Diminution of his own strictly legal Rights hath been pleased to direct Orders should be given to His Agent & the several Receivers of his Quit Rents not to insist on or receive from any Person whatsoever any Fine or Fines on or for any Lands which have been or shall be alienated by Devise, to the End His Ldps pleasure may be known & that all persons concerned may have due Notice thereof I have thought fit by & with the Advice of His Ldp's Council of State to issue this my proclamation strictly charging & requiring the several Sheriffs of this Province to make this my proclamation publick in their

p. 180 respective Counties in the usual manner that all Persons concerned may conform themselves thereto as they will answer