

an Act of Parliament from Great Britain justly Entituled an L. H. J.  
Act for the encouraging the Tobacco Trade which provides abundantly more for your Relief and answers all the Ends of the Virginia Law; I am now of Opinion you will not employ much of your Time in that particular.

The great Condescension of the Crown in parting with so considerable a Branch of the Revenue in your Favour, I mean by passing that Act for the encouraging the Tobacco Trade and the immediate Benefit and Advantages you will reap from it will be demonstrated by the Act itself which I shall send down to your House for your Perusal.

Gentlemen, I am inclinable to impute the Decay of the Revenue here more to Accident in Trade than to any Intention of the good People of the Province to defraud the Crown, but what was at first only the Accident of Trade is now grown into a pernicious Custom by which the Revenue is greatly impaired as will evidently appear by a Law made in an Assembly of the 30<sup>th</sup> April 1679. To that Law I am referred by my Instruction which I shall communicate to you for your Information.

True it is that the Circumstance of Trade is much altered p. 489  
since that Time and as it would prove of evil Consequence to reduce your Cask to the former Weight so it is very injurious to the Crown if due Regard in Proportion be not had to its Rights It is therefore expected on his Majesty's Behalf that you will reform these Abuses. The Inhabitants of this Province with a commendable Industry use their best Endeavours to cultivate the Growth of Tobacco; but there still remain many spacious Tracts of this fertile Soil especially on the Eastern Shore, which is not so agreeable to the Nature of that profitable Plant but excellently well adapted to the making of Hemp. What of this kind has been hitherto only raised for a Home Consumption in the Opinion of the Mariners equals the best that grows in Europe. An Improvement of this Manufacture is worthy your mature Consideration. You have already great Encouragement from the Crown for Importation. You are certain of a Market in England for your Produce, and have a sufficient Quantity of Land (as I am informed) to supply Great Britain with Cordage forever. The want of Seamen to navigate the vessels is a mighty Obstacle to the Trade of this Province; and since the Humour of the Generality of the People is such that they will not send their Children to Sea, if some Method were found of disposing Annually of a certain Number of the Youth maintained by the several Counties, it would in few Years be of considerable Use and Advantage to this Province in particular and promote Navigation in general.