

An Act for the Encouragement of an Iron Manufacture, Bacon
Chap. XV
within this Province.

Whereas it is represented to this present General Assembly, That there are very great Conveniencies of carrying on Iron-Works within this Province, which have not hitherto been embraced for want of proper Encouragements to some first Undertakers, altho the Consequences thereof might not only be considerably advantageous to the Persons immediately concerned therewith, but also to the Public Trade of Great-Britain, and this Province; and for that it may so happen that the Lands or Places most proper for the fixing Forge-Mills, and other Conveniencies for the carrying on such considerable Works, may happen to be within the Bounds of any Lands already reserved to his Lordship's Use, or such Lands as are in the Hands or Possession of Persons under Age, or unable to be at the Charge of carrying on such considerable Works, or else such as are wilfully obstinate, to the Hinderance of such Persons as would purchase such Lands or Places as should be fit for the carrying on so great Works, and setting them up, to the Increase of our Trade and Navigation, the Peopling of this Province, and to the Advantage of his Lordship, by the Encouraging the Taking-up such remote and barren Lands as are now entirely useless and uncultivated;

II. Be it Enacted, by the Right Honourable the Lord Proprietary, by and with the Advice and Consent of his said Lordship's Governor, and the Upper and Lower Houses of this present General Assembly, and the Authority of the same, That if any Person or Persons from and after the Publication hereof, shall desire to set up such Forging-Mill, and other Conveniencies for the carrying on such Iron-Works, upon any Land not before cultivated, next adjoining to any Run of Water within this Province, not being the Estate of Inheritance of such Undertakers, nor leased to them, to the Intent thereon to set such Forging-Mill, and other Conveniencies for the carrying on such Iron-Works, they may purchase a Writ out of Chancery, directed to the Sheriff of the County where such Land lieth, requiring him by the Oath of Twelve Men of his County, to inquire what Damage it would be to his Lordship, or others, to have such Builders or Undertakers invested with an absolute Estate of Inheritance in One Hundred Acres of such Land, proper for the setting up such Forging-Mill, and other Conveniencies for the carrying on such Iron-Works as aforesaid: The Form of which Writ followeth, viz.

“ Charles, absolute Lord and Proprietary of the Provinces
“ of Maryland and Avalon, Lord Baron of Baltimore &c.