

L. H. J.  
Liber No. 49  
Dec. 15

If you will only recur to the Charter that was granted by his Majesty King Charles the First, to the Noble Ancestor of our present Right Honourable Proprietary, you may find, that among many others, that King was pleased to vest his Lordship with a Power of making Laws, with the Assent of the Freeholders of this Province, or of their Representatives; and, moreover, left it entirely to his Lordship to Convene the said Freeholders, or their Representatives, after such Manner, Sort or Form, as he should, in his Discretion, judge proper.

The first Settlement that was made in this Province, after the Lord Baltimore had obtained his Patent, was made by his Lordship's Brother, and between Two and Three Hundred other Persons, in February 163 $\frac{2}{3}$  [sic]. As the Lord Proprietary spared no Trouble or Expence to procure Adventurers, the Number of Inhabitants increased apace. His Lordship after a while, thinking it necessary, for their better Government, that Laws should be Enacted, by certain Instructions dated the 15th of April, 1637, impowered his Brother, who had, from his Arrival here, acted as Captain General or Governor, to call a General Assembly of the People for that Purpose. In Pursuance of these Instructions, Summonses were issued through the Hands of the Sheriff, requiring the Freemen to attend in Person, or appoint their Proxies to appear, at St. Mary's the 25th of January, 1638/7 [1637/8], but, the Secretary, and other Members of his Lordship's Council, were called by a particular Summons, directed to each of them. At the Opening of the Session, there appeared, from the several Hundreds of St. Mary's County and Kent-Island, Twenty-four Persons, besides the Members of the Council, and the Governor, who, during this, and several other Sessions, sat as President, and directed all Things that the Governor, who, during this, and several other Sessions, sat as President, and directed all Things that concerned Form and Order. Some Bills, which had been already prepared, were produced in the House; but they not being agreed to, a Committee was appointed to frame others, and the Assembly was adjourned. On the 24th of March following, they agreed to several Drafts or Bills, which the Governor was desired to send to England, for his Lordship's Approbation; among these, was One, or Part of One, touching General Assemblies, contained in the following Words: "The Lieutenant-General, and Secretary (or his Deputy), and Gentlemen summoned by special Writ, and One or Two Burgesses out of every Hundred (at the Choice of the Freemen) at any Time hereafter assembled, shall be judged a General Assembly." Whether these Drafts or Bills were ever approved of by his Lordship, does not, I believe, appear upon Record; but, on the 25th of February, 1638/9, another General Assembly being then called, after the same Manner as the former, and the Governor being then impowered to Assent, in his Lordship's Name, to any Bill or Act that should be by the