

my Restriction of Officers in the Article of fees, it is unnecessary to prove. The Impropriety of it must strike at the first Glance.

L. H. J.
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I thought, and still think, that his Lordship has the clearest Right to dispose of his real Estate on such Terms as he may judge to be proper, to direct the formal Observances in making Titles to his Grants, and to settle and regulate the Fees his Officers in this Department may demand and receive, and was very little aware, that any momentous Question could be raised to alarm any one, which, I hope, will be obviated, when I declare, that tho' I must conceive his Lordship's Preheminence does not deprive him of the Power every Man has over his Property, either to retain or dispose of it, on such Terms as we may chuse, yet am I also satisfied, that his Lordship has as little Authority as Inclination to reduce the People of this Province to the Condition of Tenants at Will, or in any Degree to impeach or impair their Rights. You speak of his Conditions of Plantations. They are various, and were published at different Periods. The Circumstances of the Province have undergone great Alterations, and the Conditions having been adapted to these, have consequently varied. His Lordship's Property and Authorities, under the Charter, are very ample and extensive. By the Terms of the Royal Grant, he may grant in fee Simple, fee Tail, for Life, or Years, by so many, such, and so great Services, Customs and Rents, as to him, his Heirs and Successors shall seem fit and agreeable. You, however, cannot but think him bound by some Conditions of Plantations, tho' you have not explained whether the first, last, or which of the intermediate, among the various Conditions that have at different Periods been published; to all of which, moreover, Reservations have been added, that they should be in force only till superceded by other. This Pretension is so extravagant, that it cannot be of any Use to spend Time in exposing it. Whilst you express a Solicitude that his Lordship's Tenants should be secure in their Property, the Regard due to Justice should have prevented a Suggestion that must shock every Idea of it. His Lordship will make no injurious Attempt on the Rights of his Tenants, nor suffer them to invade his.

His Lordship's Authority to dispose of his Property, as he pleases, cannot be seriously doubted, and as he may set the Value of One hundred Shillings or One hundred Pounds, on One hundred Acres of Land, so may he, as well as every other Person having Property, require that his Officers and Agents shall be employed, Formalities be observed, and fees or Rewards paid to his Servants. In this Respect the Land Office may be called, if you please his Lordship's private Office. So far as it is the Repository of the Muniments of his Tenants Estate, it is a publick Office, and all the People of Maryland are entitled to have Access to it, as well as to other Offices. It would be Injustice to deny it; but the Officers in this Department