

The expediency of it I do not presume to condemn, or to reason upon ; but, the practice ought to be made conformable to the instructions, or the instructions to the practice.

I have spoken hitherto chiefly with an eye to common warrants ; but, the abuse, as it may safely be called, of the reasonable privileges of division and assignment has extended also to special warrants. In respect to these a check has indeed been lately interposed in the order of the governor and council of the 31st of July 1805, directing that the registers of the land office shall not thereafter issue any special warrant with more than one location. The circumstances that gave rise to, and that attended, this order cannot be fully explained without a detail too minute and too personal to be with propriety exhibited. It is sufficient to state that the late chancellor, observing by the papers submitted to him in a particular case, that uses were made of special warrants such as he considered wholly irregular and unauthorised, addressed a letter to the register of the Western shore land office, in which, after condemning in the most decided manner the practices in question, as well as the splitting of common warrants, already described, and expressing some doubt whether he, in his capacity of judge of the land office, could with propriety abolish those abuses, he recommended it to the register, as the most eligible course, to represent the whole matter to the governor and council, giving him permission in that case to forward the aforesaid letter as part of the representation. The register pursued the chancellor's advice, and the order above referred to was passed in consequence : but, what concerned the splitting of common warrants appearing, as the register was informed by a letter from the council, to require some additional and explanatory instructions to surveyors, the consideration of it was postponed ; and, perhaps, because the attention of the board has not again been formally called to the subject, it has never since been taken up.

Previous to this regulation a person apprized before hand of cultivated vacancy in ten different situations, might procure a single warrant with as many different locations, and sell them out to the same number of persons, each of whom might make a survey, return a certificate, and obtain a patent, for more land than the entire (c) warrant originally expressed.

(c) I do not mean to say that a warrant never was issued under the former government with more than one location. I have, by a close examination, discovered a few cases of special warrants with several locations, within about the last ten years of the proprietary government. I shall not attempt, here, to account for this, or for other irregularities in the manner of obtaining warrants. A person of consequence in the government has received warrant upon his letter to the clerk, promising to pay when he should come to Annapolis that caution money which, by the most