

by act during the whole period from the founding of the province to the year 1763 contains 171 names of individuals or families, eighty-four of them naturalized before 1689, and eighty-seven later; and some of the names are British. By the end of the seventeenth century there were many who had been born in the province, and the development of a distinctive American people must have become perceptible then or soon after, but, whatever the growth toward separate identity, England continued to be looked to as the home country, and well down in the eighteenth century going to England was spoken of as going home.

The holders of the larger tracts of land occupied a somewhat higher social level and constituted a ruling class, but never the order of nobility that seems to have been contemplated in Lord Baltimore's first solicitation of settlers,<sup>1</sup> in charter references to lords of manors, and in provisions of early provincial statutes for distinctions to these lords.<sup>2</sup> Some of the features of an order of nobility were sketched in, but the whole was never fully reproduced, and what was drawn faded out; the lords and ladies attained to no greater dignity than that of legal forms. Some of the landholders, however, bore arms inherited in England, and many are distinguished in the records as "Gent" or "Esq," until they acquired local distinctions more highly valued. Rank in the provincial militia organization provided the local distinction most frequently used; and the lists of judges present at the openings of court sessions recorded in this volume will be seen to include many colonels, chiefs of the military organizations of their respective counties.

The smaller landholders were constantly receiving additions to their number in immigrants able to take up land, and in those who passed from the condition of white servants into the landholding class upon the expirations of their terms of service, when each servant became entitled to fifty acres and necessary equipment for a year. These white servants were persons of quite varied quality whose services were sold out in the first place as a means of paying for their passage, including convicts sentenced in England to pass seven years in some colony, indentured servants contracted out for from two to five years' service, and what were termed "freewillers," or those who engaged their services as they might wish after reaching Maryland. It cannot be said from any knowledge now possessed that immigrants from any one part of England predominated in the province, but it is observable that Yorkshire, the home county of the proprietary, and other northern counties, were the sources of a large number of the landholders whose counties of origin are known.

The peculiar geography of their chosen land had its effect on the life and

<sup>1</sup> Kilty, *op. cit.*, pp. 29 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> An Act for Treasons, 1638, ch. 22, *Archives*, I, 70; An Act What Persons shall be called to every General Assembly, 1638, ch. 26, *ibid.*, p. 74.