

## At a Sessions of Assembly begun and held at the

City of *Annapolis*, the Twenty Second Day of *June*, in the Thirteenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Queen *ANNE*, of Great-Britain, &c. Annoq; Domini One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fourteen, were enacted the Laws following, *Viz.*

*An ACT for relieving the Inhabitants of this Province from some Aggrievances in the Prosecution of Suits at Law.*

**W**HEREAS during the late long and expensive War, Her Majesties good Subjects of this Province have greatly suffer'd; and many of them have been utterly ruined, not only by Losses at Sea of their Tobacco, (which is their only staple Manufacture,) being taken by the Enemy, but also by the *European* Markets being shut up by Reason of the Export to *France* and *Spain* in great Measure prohibited, so that very many honest and industrious Planters, Her Majesty's Subjects here, by the very Charges of necessary Cloathing and Tools for themselves and Families, are become vastly indebted; and no Prospect as yet appearing, whereby they may extricate themselves out of their miserable and deplorable Circumstances, which are very much heightned and aggravated by their being sued and brought to *Annapolis* from the remotest Parts of this Province, to their manifest Oppression and Impoverishment: So that many of the good Inhabitants of this Province daily desert their Habitations, and remove themselves to Plantations and Colonies where they are far less serviceable to Her Sacred Majesty, and Her Revenue of Customs of Tobacco, which calls for some speedy and proper Remedy to be applied thereto. Wherefore this present General Assembly humbly supplicate her most Sacred Majesty, that it may be Enacted,

*And be it Enacted, by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of Her Majesty's Governour, Council and Assembly of this Province, and the Authority of the same, That from and after the End of this present Session of Assembly, all Persons whatsoever residing, negotiating or trading to or within this Province, having any Personal Claim or Demand against any the Inhabitants of this Province, wherein the original Debt or Damages do not exceed the Value of Twenty Pounds Sterling, or Five Thousand Pounds of Tobacco, shall (by Virtue of this Act,) be obliged to sue and implead their several and respective Debtors in the several and respective County-Courts where such their Debtors inhabit and reside, and not elsewhere; on Penalty of suffering a Non-Suit, and paying the Defendant his reasonable Charges, to be adjudged by the Justices of any other Court wherein they shall be sued and impleaded: Any Law, Statute, Usage or Custom to the contrary, notwithstanding.*

*And be it further Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, by and with the Advice and Consent aforesaid, That where any Debt or Damages is demanded by Virtue of any Bond or Writing Obligatory, the Penalty of such Bond shall not, altho' it exceed Twenty Pounds in Money, or Five Thousand Pounds of Tobacco, entitle any Plaintiff to bring his Action in*

Debtors to be sued in the Counties where they live, for any Sums that exceed not 5000 l. Tobacco, or 20 l. Sterling.

In which the real Sum is to be regarded in case of Penalty.