

rents and alienation fines reserved upon them; for, with regard to the *condition of purchase*, it is to be observed that, although this consisted at first, as has been stated, in the mere act of emigration for the purpose of inhabiting, &c. other terms were subsequently imposed, and various prices, in money or commodities from time to time assigned, for the lands that yet remained vacant. The provisions made by acts of assembly, in aid of those sources of revenue, for the support of the proprietary, are matters belonging rather to the general history of the province than to that of the land office establishment:—I shall therefore notice them only so far as they stand connected with the subject of the rents and fines abovementioned, and in regard to the inherent land revenue, as it may be called, of the proprietary, it is not so material to ascertain all the minute branches of which it might consist as to describe the system of collection, and the connection of that system with the operations of the land office.—I must however mention, again, that the interpretation of the charter, as it respected lord Baltimore's absolute ownership of the province in the light of a private estate, was not from the first in question, but that his theory and pretensions were on many occasions opposed, as involving a power to defeat the main end of the grant, and the just expectations of the original settlers, in withholding those facilities and encouragements which might be requisite towards the growth and improvement of the colony. There is no doubt that the founder of the province of Maryland fulfilled very faithfully and honourably every intention of his grant; but the privilege of raising at his pleasure the conditions of plantation, or the price of land, was not fully acquiesced in by the colonists, especially during the periods of trouble and interruption of the proprietary government. An instance of the disposition of the people to dispute the proprietary's construction of his grant has been shewn in the act concerning "*rights of land.*"—Many other documents, and passages in the records concur to prove that there never was, at least in the early times of the province, a perfect understanding on this subject, but, that while lord Baltimore altered and raised the terms of his grants of land by instructions to his chief officers, as any common land proprietor might, by direction to his steward or other agent, the government generally viewed the conditions of plantation, and instructions relative to land affairs, as matters of public and political concern, which ought not only to be universally known, but to be more fixed and permanent than they actually were. Accordingly, the chief agent was not only called upon, as has been seen, to certify the existing instructions, but, was required also to produce a correct copy of the charter: that these instruments