

ministrator, rendered the estate immune to suit (p. 326). Had more than 2999 pounds of tobacco been claimed by Chafe, action could not have been brought in a county court, the Provincial Court having jurisdiction where the sum involved was 3000 pounds of tobacco and upwards. There were three other litigants who sued to collect payment for varying amounts of physick, without indication as to whether or not medical attention was also involved. One of these was entered by no less a person than James Lindsay, one of the justices (p. 110). The administrator of the estate of Samuel Burford successfully sued Henry Moore, who was a carpenter, for 1280 pounds of tobacco for physick administered by Burford to Moore (p. 264). As the result of a petition to the Upper House of Assembly by Alexander Howell, a former servant of Mrs. Elizabeth Weeks, who had been disabled "by a distemper of the numbe Paulsy and shaking of his Joynts, and a lameness in his backe and knees and leggs", the Charles County commissioners were ordered by the Assembly to provide for him (*Arch. Md.* II; 14). The county court record shows that Thomas Gibson agreed to provide for Howell with "sufficient meate, drinke, and Cloaths washing and Lodging at 1400 lbs. [of tobacco] per annum" (pp. 20-21). The Charles County court finally relieved itself of the care of Gibson, when at the March, 1667/8, session, it agreed to pay Absolom Covent, a Bristol merchant, 1000 pounds of tobacco to transport him to England (p. 123). The suit of John Barker against Nicholas Grosse for accommodation "in the tyme of the Def<sup>s</sup> Sicknesse" perhaps was only a boarding bill (p. 547).

#### VITAL RECORDS

Charles County was one of the few Maryland counties which lived up to the provisions of the act of the Assembly requiring that records of *births, marriages, and deaths*, be filed with the county clerk and recorded. Or perhaps it would be better to say one of the few counties in which vital records have been preserved, perhaps because they were entered in the body of the court proceedings, and not kept in separate libers which have since been lost. It will be seen from the dates of the court sessions at which the vital records were entered, that the events recorded had often long preceded the date of their entry in the record book. The births of a number of children in one family were not infrequently entered at the same time. For the nine year period there were recorded 60 births, 7 marriages, and 16 deaths. This is obviously a very incomplete record over a nine year period for a community having an average population of about 1800 persons. It is evident that the majority of births, marriages, and deaths were not recorded at all. Perhaps the Anglican ministers in Charles County and the Jesuits at Portobacco kept registers which have been lost.

#### INDENTURED SERVANTS

Difficulties between *indentured servants* and their masters occupied more of the attention of the county courts than did any other civil cases except actions for debt. One of the frequent causes of trouble was the attempt of masters to extend the period of service beyond the provisions of the indenture; or, if there