

THE

LAND-HOLDER'S ASSISTANT, &c.

BOOK THE FIRST.

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HISTORY AND ANCIENT PRACTICE OF THE LAND-OFFICE

CHAPTER I.

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BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE SETTLEMENT OF MARYLAND

**T**HE Right of the Crown of Great Britain to the territory of North America was derived from the discovery of that Continent by Sebastian Cabot, who, in the year 1498, explored a great part of the Coast, under a Commission from King Henry the seventh, and, in the name of that Monarch, took formal possession of the Country, by the name, since restricted to a particular Island, of Newfoundland.

The original discovery of the New World is, indeed, with justice attributed to Christopher Columbus, who under the auspices of the Court of Spain, in his celebrated voyage, undertaken in the year 1492, for the purpose of arriving at the East Indies by sailing westward, discovered the Islands bordering on the Coast of South America, and in a subsequent voyage found the Continent itself. The discoveries, however, of Columbus are no farther connected with the origin of the English Settlements in America than as having excited that spirit of enterprize and research which gave rise to the Commission granted to the (a) Cabots in 1496, and resulted in the successful voyage of Sebastian Cabot already mentioned.

But, although the assumed right of colonization took its date from the discoveries of Cabot, and though the English availed themselves of this claim so far as concerned the objects of fishing on the Coasts and of traffic with the natives,

(a) John Cabot, a Venetian who had settled in England, and Lewis, Sebastian, and Sanctius his sons.