

C H A P. II.

Passed 30th
October 1727.

An ACT directing the Payment of Fees arising due on the Prosecution of White Servants which shall hereafter be imported into this Province. *Lib. L. N^o 5. fol. 145.*

Preamble.

^a viz. by
1715, ch. 26,
§. 9 and 10,
hereby alter-
ed.

FORASMUCH as it is evident to this present General Assembly, That the Charges of late arising to the Public, and several of the Counties within this Province, on the Prosecution of Servants, have been a very great Burthen to the Public. And whereas it is manifest that several Felonies, and other Offences, have been frequently committed by Servants, which might have been prevented by their Masters, by taking Care to keep them in due Order and Subjection, and sometimes Servants have been induced by the Encouragement, and sometimes by the Severity of their Masters, to commit Felonies and other Crimes, the Masters well knowing that in case of Prosecution, the ^a Expence thereof must have been borne by the Public, or the Inhabitants of the County or Counties where the Facts have been committed: For Remedy of which Evils,

Fees due on
Prosecution
of imported
Servants, at
his Lordship's
Suit, shall be
paid by the
Masters,

and not by
the Public
or County.

II. *Be it Enacted, by the Right Honourable the Lord Proprietary, by and with the Advice and Consent of his Lordship's Governor, and the Upper and Lower Houses of Assembly, and the Authority of the same,* That from and after the End of this present Session of Assembly, it shall and may be lawful, to and for the several and respective Officers within this Province, to whom any Fees shall arise due on any Prosecution of the Lord Proprietary, against any Servants that shall be imported into this Province, at any Time after the End of this Session, to charge the same to, and recover the same from, the Masters or Owners of such Servants, in the same manner as if they arose due from, and were the proper Debts of, the Masters or Owners themselves, as by other Laws are provided: And that it shall not be lawful for any Officer, or other Person, to charge the Public, or any County, for any Fees that shall arise due on the Prosecution of any such Servants as aforesaid; any Law, Statute, Usage or Custom to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

Recompence
to be made
the Owners
by Servitude,
not exceed-
ing 3 Years.

III. *And be it further Enacted, by the Authority, Advice and Consent aforesaid,* That it shall and may be lawful to and for the Owners of such Servants (unless the Offence whereof he, she or they, shall be convicted, be Capital, and that the Offender or Offenders are actually Executed for the same,) at or before the Time of the Expiration of such Servant's Servitude, to carry such Servant to the County Court held for their County, and on their making it fully appear to the Justices of such Court, how much Tobacco hath been paid by them for such Servant, on Account of such Prosecutions, it shall and may be lawful for the Justices of such Court, and they are hereby required, to adjudge what Time (not exceeding Three Years) they shall think reasonable, to serve the Owner in Recompence to such Fees paid as aforesaid, unless such Servant can make Payment thereof in some other manner.

Bastard Chil-
dren of Wo-
men Servants
to be main-
tained by the
Master, &c.

IV. *And be it Enacted, by the Authority aforesaid,* That all Masters and Owners of Women Servants, having Bastard Children, shall be obliged to maintain such Bastard Children, at his and their own proper Cost and Charge, during the Continuance of such Servant Woman in his or their Service.

and if the Fa-
ther be un-
known, &c.
the Mother
shall make
Recompence
by Servitude,
&c.

V. *Provided,* That it shall and may be lawful for the Justices of the County Court, where such Bastard Child or Children shall be born, to adjudge the Mother or Mothers of such Bastard Child or Children, where the Father is unknown, or incapable to make any Satisfaction, to make her or their Master or Owners full Satisfaction and Recompence by Servitude, or otherwise, for maintaining and supporting such Bastard Child or Children; any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary notwithstanding.

VI. *Provided*