

PREFACE.

In providing for the publication of the early Archives of the Province and State, the General Assembly of Maryland had two objects in view: to secure these Archives from further loss, and to place students and investigators abroad in as favorable a position as is enjoyed by those who have access to the original manuscripts.

It is clear that neither of these objects will be attained unless the records are printed exactly as they stand. The moment an editor allows himself to make any correction, however slight or obvious, the integrity of the text is gone, and in its stead is given a version, the accuracy of which depends upon an unknown quantity.

The text, therefore, has been printed exactly as it is written, with all errors, irregularities of spelling, contractions, eccentricities of punctuation, &c., faithfully reproduced, so far as careful copying, collation, and proof-reading could insure fidelity. The solitary apparent exception occurs in the case of the article "the," written in some of the manuscripts with a cursive form of the Old English þ (*th*). This character is often erroneously represented in modern printing by a *y* (y^e), leading to the absurd notion that at some stage of the language "the" was pronounced "ye." A special type for this character would probably be embarrassing to some readers, so the word has been invariably printed "the."

A few clerical errors or peculiarities in the text which seemed to call for some remark, have been noticed on another page.

The text has been taken from contemporary records whenever these were to be had; and where they were lacking, from the most ancient copy, except in cases where a later copy from a lost original gave a full instead of an abbreviated text. The copy followed, and the page of the MS., are indicated on the margin of each page.

A careful description and collation of the various copies is given in the appended Calendar prepared by Mr. J. W. M. Lee, which presents a register of all the MS. records of the Province and State, in the custody of the Historical Society.

In order to do something towards filling the many lamentable gaps in the records, copies have been procured from the Public Record Office, London, of all important uncopied MSS. pertaining to our early colonial history that could be discovered. Such of these as appear in the present volume are distinguished by the marginal sign P. R. O. Mr. W. Noel Sainsbury, of the Public Record Office, has promised to have search made for others. As, doubtless, transcripts of all public documents of import-