

the first rate evidence on the politics and constitutional development of Maryland during the proprietary period. Without these two sub-series historians would be in poor case for writing our colonial political history. Their completion was a milestone in the collection and presentation of materials on colonial Maryland. (4) Finally, the smallest of the sub-series, the Muster Rolls, required only a single volume.

The two other sub-series were open-ended, each with considerable archival material yet to be edited and printed. Both presented some problems which called for careful consideration when the future of the *Archives* came under discussion.

Eldest of the two, the Court Series began in 1887 as Volume IV of the *Archives* with the Proceedings of the Provincial Court, 1637-1650. Three additional volumes (*Archives* X, XLI, and XLIX) had appeared at varying intervals by 1932, bringing the provincial court proceedings down to 1666. Thus far the Court Series had contained materials from a single archival source. Thereafter the editors began introducing other materials that gave the series its miscellaneous character. The fifth volume of the Court Series (Volume LI of the *Archives*) reprinted the Chancery Court Proceedings for the years 1668/69-1679. The sixth volume (Volume LIII of the *Archives*) contained proceedings of the Charles County Court, 1658-1666, and the unique court leet and court baron of St. Clements Manor. In the seventh volume (Volume LIV of the *Archives*) the editors introduced proceedings of three new county courts—Kent, 1648-1676; Talbot, 1662-1674; and Somerset, 1665-1668. Then followed an eighth volume (LVII of the *Archives*), which returned to the proceedings of the provincial court, 1666-1670, and a ninth (*Archives*, LX) which picked up the Charles County court proceedings in 1666 and brought the record down to 1674.

After this season of experimentation the editors in 1952 returned for good and all to the provincial court proceedings. The tenth to fifteenth volumes of the Court Series take the record from 1671 to 1683.

The fifteen volumes of the Court Series print an uncommonly wide spectrum of proceedings for students of our early law. First to last some eleven types of courts of record flourished in colonial Maryland. Substantial samples of proceedings from five of these appear in the *Archives*: the provincial court, various county courts, the chancery court, and the courts leet and baron. Maryland, then, is the best represented of any American colony by legal materials in letter press editions, if one includes two additional volumes in the American Legal Records: Carroll T. Bond (ed.), *Proceedings of the Maryland Court of Appeals, 1695-1729* (Washington, 1933) and Joseph H. Smith and Philip A. Crowl (eds.), *Court Records of Prince George's County Court* (Washington, 1964).

The chief problem of this series can be stated by the question: where does it go from here? The bulk of court proceedings is mountainous. Proceedings of the provincial court alone would, by conservative estimation, run to more than eighty volumes of the *Archives*. Besides these the collection of county court proceedings contains perhaps triple this bulk. In approximate figures, these