

ROOMS OF THE MARYLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

BALTIMORE, *September 12, 1885.*

*To the Maryland Historical Society:*

GENTLEMEN:

The Committee on the State Archives have the pleasure to present for your approval and acceptance the result of their work during the past summer. The volume now handed you is the third published under the State appropriation and your direction, and embraces the Proceedings of the Council from the earliest date in our records (1636) to the year 1667. These are preceded by the charter and documents illustrative of the first settlement, which are only to be found in the Public Record Office, London, and other repositories abroad. These papers, strictly speaking, are not a part of the Maryland records, yet they partly close a gap in our documentary history, which can only be fully closed by the recovery of the earliest volumes of our records, if they still exist.

It was thought highly important by your Committee that the earliest volumes of our records should be placed in print with as little delay as possible, and with that object in view, they have laid aside for the present the Assembly series, although they had ample material in readiness for a third volume in that series, and have taken up the Council Proceedings.

The printing of the present volume leaves but little of the four earliest manuscript volumes to print, and it is thought that a volume in each of the Court, and Land series will place every entry in those manuscript volumes in type.

The division of the Archives into four series, viz. Assembly, Council, Court, and Land, was determined on after much deliberation and the careful examination of many entries in the various volumes.

The labor of gathering and arranging the material for the present volume has been much greater than for both the preceding volumes. For each of the dozen books from which the volume has been gathered, a list of dates of every entry as they occur in the volumes was made; from these dozen lists a second and consolidated one, in strict chronology, was written, and both the separate and consolidated lists were used as check lists in making up the copy for the printer.

The thorough indexes which accompany the volume are the work of Miss Lucy H. Harrison and Dr. Browne. The former making that of Persons and Places, and the latter the Topical.

The Committee have not received any further accessions to the Archives from Annapolis, but recently a number of volumes of Court Records from 1663 to 1782, a volume of Laws, 1731-1752, and two Council books