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MARYLAND

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ROMAN CATHOLIC COLONY 27

STATED IN THREE LETTERS, 75

BY

E. D. N. ✓

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Nec falsa dicere, nec vera reticere.
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MARYLAND NOT A ROMAN CATHOLIC COLONY.



LETTER FIRST.



From the St. Paul Pioneer, December 8, 1874.

Bishop Gibbons, the intelligent prelate of the Roman Catholic Church in Virginia, in his reply to Gladstone on Papal Infallibility, uses this language :

“ As to whether religious and civil liberty will suffer any detriment from the Catholic Church, we can appeal with confidence to the past, especially to the history of our own country. The same spirit still animates and always will animate the Catholic Church that dictated the memorable decree which was passed by the General Assembly of Catholics (Maryland), in 1649: ‘ No person whatsoever in this province professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall from henceforth be any ways troubled or molested for his or her religion, or in the free exercise thereof, or any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion against his or her consent.’ ”

“ They love a cause best who suffer for it most.”

The charter of Maryland granted to Lord Baltimore was *not a charter of religious liberty*, but the very opposite. If any one will take the time to examine, he will see that the instrument provided that no chapel should be erected there unless it was dedicated according to the *laws of the Church of England*. The colony was not founded from a religious but a pecuniary motive. The first settlers were sent out by a trading corporation. They were not, as is often stated, about two hundred Roman Catholic gentlemen. Cecil, Lord Baltimore, in a letter to Wentworth, afterwards the unfortunate Earl of Strafford, says :

“ By the help of some of your Lordship’s good friends and mine, I have sent a hopeful colony into Maryland, with a fair and favorable expectation of good success, without any danger of any great prejudice to myself, in respect that many others are joined with me in the adventure. There are two of my brothers with very near twenty other gentlemen of very good fashion, and *three hundred laboring men*.”

These laboring men were mostly Protestants, as they took the oath of supreme allegiance before sailing, and of the twelve who died on the voyage, ten were Protestants. Thomas Cornwallis and Jerome Hawley who went out as Councillors of the colony, were adherents of the Church of England.(1)

(1) Thomas Cornwallis, son of Sir William, grandson of Sir Charles, Ambassador to Spain, returned to England after the restoration of monarchy, and in 1676 died at Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk. His son, Rev. Thomas, was a Rector in Suffolk, and died 1731.

Rev. William, son of Rev. Thomas, was also a Rector in Suffolk and died 1786.

Rev. William, son of Rev. W., was a Rector in Kent, and died 1827.

Caroline Frances, the last of the line, daughter of Rev. William, the second, the talented authoress of “Small books on Great Subjects,” died unmarried in 1858.

A noble Protestant succession!

Councillor Jerome Hawley died in 1638; his brother William was a Protestant in the Assembly of 1650. His brother Henry, was Governor of Barbadoes.

Father Andrew White, a sincere Jesuit, after the expedition had passed the usual custom house inspection, came aboard at Isle of Wight.(1) In 1638 he says in his journal that he and his associates were blessed by God, "for of the Protestants who came from England this year, almost all have been converted to the faith."

These conversions raised a great uproar in England, and on December 1st, 1641, the House of Commons complained to the King, of "another State moulded within this State, independent in government, contrary in interest and affection, *secretly corrupting the ignorant or negligent professors of religion.*" Soon after this, Lord Baltimore, afraid that he might lose his lands, wrote to the American Jesuits to remember that they had no more privileges in that Province than in England.(2) Father White thus alludes to Lord Baltimore's conduct:

"Occasion of suffering has not been wanting from those from whom it was proper to expect aid and protection."

About the year 1642, Rev. Patrick Copland, a learned divine of the Church of England, living at Bermuda's Isle, with others embraced the views of Roger Williams upon "Toleration," and about 1645, moved to Eleuthera, one of the Bahamas to enjoy their religious views. They sent a message to the Puritans of Virginia, whose pastor was the Rev. Dr. Harrison, subsequently Chaplain of Henry Cromwell, when Lord Lieutenant

(1) In 1645, Captain Ingle, commissioned by Parliament, appeared at Saint Mary. Father White was taken prisoner, and sent to England, tried and found guilty of teaching contrary to the statutes of England. He remained in prison until January 7, 1648, when the "House of Commons did concur with the Lords in granting the petition of Andrew White, a Jesuit who was brought out of America into England by force, in an English ship," and ordered him to be discharged, provided he left the kingdom within fifteen days. See *House of Commons Journal*.

(2) On October 7, 1642, he wrote these words:

"No ecclesiastic in the Province ought to expect, nor is Lord Baltimore, nor any of his officers, although they are Roman Catholics, obliged in conscience to allow such ecclesiastics any more or other privileges, exemptions, or immunities for their persons, lands or goods than is bestowed by his Majesty or officers to like persons in England."

of Ireland, inviting them to cast in their lot upon this Isle of Patmos ; but these Puritans, after corresponding with Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts, declined, and accepted an invitation to live in Maryland. They landed on the Severn river, and named their settlements PROVIDENCE, as Roger Williams had already called his plantation in Rhode Island, but afterwards it was called Annapolis. Stone, the Governor of Maryland, about this time, was a Protestant from Virginia.

Owing to the entreaties of the friends of Williams and Copland, the English House of Commons, on October 27th, 1645, ordered "*that the inhabitants of Bermudas, and of all other American plantations now planted or hereafter planted, should without molestation or trouble, have and enjoy the liberty of conscience in matters of God's worship.*"

Two years later, Parliament passed another act allowing all persons to meet for religious duties and ordinances in a fit place, provided the public peace was not disturbed.

The Maryland act of 1649, to which Bishop Gibbons alludes as the work of Catholics, was simply an outgrowth of the English statutes, and passed under the strong Puritan influence in Maryland. After all that has been said about its being an Act for religious liberty, let us not forget that it provided that any one who denied the Holy Trinity should be punished with death !

LETTER SECOND.

From St Paul Pioneer, December 13, 1874.

"W. M.", the critic of my purely historical notice of an error of Bishop Gibbons, that the Maryland Assembly of 1649 was Roman Catholic, I feel quite sure, from the style, is a fellow Philadelphian, a courteous gentleman, a sincere Christian, who, after a severe mental struggle, left the Protestant Episcopal Church and entered the Church of Rome; a man who would scorn to strip any church of the glory of any achievement, and, although, as Shakspeare says, "jesters do oft prove prophets," I do not think that he will ever so far forget his dignity as to joke upon a serious subject, or to trifle with historical truth.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure that I remove the misapprehensions of the first article, which was simply designed to show that the majority of the first settlers of Maryland were not Roman Catholics, and that the act of 1649, relative to religion, was passed by the influence of Protestants, and was not an act of toleration in the full sense, as it provided death for Unitarians.

"W. M." thinks I am not charitable, because I said Lord Baltimore founded his colony not from religious but pecuniary motives. Lord Baltimore tells us that he came to the New World to benefit his fortunes. He did not profess to be a strict religious man; the woman who accompanied him to Virginia was not his lawful wife; one of his sons, who became Governor of Maryland, was illegitimate. Upon the eve of his first departure to America he stated in a letter to Wentworth,

that he went to look after his investments. [*See Earl of Strafford's Letters*. Dublin, 1740. Vol. I. p. 39.] His words are these:

"I must either go and settle it in better order, or else give it over, and lose all the charges I have been at hitherto, for other men to build fortunes upon; and I had rather be esteemed a fool by some, for the hazard of one month's journey, than to prove myself one certainly for six years past, if the business be now lost for the want of a little pains and care."

Newfoundland proving too rigorous, he sought a place where the climate was milder, and the winters shorter, to establish a commercial settlement like that in which he had been interested in the north. Am I uncharitable in saying, in 1874, just what the projector of Maryland said in the Seventeenth Century?

Sir James Grahame's remark, that it was the intention of either Lord Baltimore, the father or the son to colonize Maryland with "the persecuted votaries of the Church of Rome," cannot be proved from any authentic document of that age.

Cecil, Lord Baltimore laughed at the idea of his colonists being religious votaries. After the "Ark" and the "Dove" sailed from Gravesend, some one raised the report that nuns were aboard, and soldiers intended for Spain, "which," he says to Wentworth, "I believe your Lordship will laugh at." The ships were sent for by Admiral Pennington, and brought back, and all the passengers of the "Dove," who were mostly laboring men, took the oath of allegiance, which Lord Baltimore had refused to take, in order to procure a settlement in Virginia, and which oath Pope Urban the Eighth had charged the Irish "rather to lose their lives than to take."

"W. M." says that as soon as they landed they took possession "for our Saviour and for our Sovereign Lord the King of England," and planted a cross, and then he asks, "does that look like the act of a Protestant colony?"

The country had been *possessed* years before. At the Isle of Kent in Maryland, there was a Protestant settlement. Yow-

ocomaco, named Saint Mary by Governor Calvert and Father White, had for several years been a trading point for New England vessels, and one of the principal traders there, after the arrival of Governor Calvert, Henry Fleet, acted as his interpreter, and became a member of the first legislature, and was a Protestant.

While the first Governor at Saint Mary was a Roman Catholic, the two Councillors, Hawley and Cornwallis, were Protestants. Marmaduke Snow, the prominent merchant, and Henry Fleet, the interpreter, were also Protestants — “obstinate heretics” is the term used by Father White.

Does this look like a Roman Catholic colony?

The colonists had no option in this matter of planting the cross. It was the act of the Governor, Lord Baltimore’s son, and Father White, his spiritual guide.

Now let us look at what “W. M.” considers must be a “*merry joke*.”

A few years ago I searched the manuscript records in the Maryland Capitol, at Annapolis, and read every work or pamphlet on Maryland known to be published, and I think it can be proved that the Government of Maryland in 1649 was as follows:

The Governor, Protestant,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Councillors, Protestant,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Burgesses, Protestant,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
								16
Councillors, Roman Catholic,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Burgesses, Roman Catholic,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
								8

About two-thirds of the Assembly of 1649 Protestants! Is it a “merry joke,” as W. M. says?

Maryland Assembly of 1650, Protestants 8, Roman Catholics 4.

Is this another “joke,” or is it sober fact?

The only object I had in my previous communication was the vindication of historical truth. If "W. M." shall point out any error, I will be truly thankful, for it has been my aim in writing *nec falsa dicere, nec vera reticere*.

In this discussion I do not propose to consider what Bancroft, Sir James Grahame, or partisan pamphleteers have said, but the writings of Lord Baltimore, the journals of Parliament, and the charter and manuscript records of Maryland, the State which was the birthplace of my father, and the home of some of my ancestors for nearly two hundred years.

LETTER THIRD.

From St. Paul Pioneer, December 20, 1874.

"W. M." has admitted that the charter of Maryland could not be expected to secure religious liberty, emanating, as it did, from the government of what he calls "persecuting England," but intimates that the charter shows that Lord Baltimore was actuated by a *religious motive* in founding the colony.

The charter simply uses the language of all charters of that period, as may be seen by comparing it with the charter of Carolana, A. D. 1629, granted to the Attorney General of England, and proves nothing as to real motive :

CAROLANA, A. D. 1629.

"Whereas, our trusty and well beloved subject Sir Robert Heath, our Attorney General, being excited with a laudable zeal for the propagation of the Christian faith."

MARYLAND, A. D. 1632.

"Whereas, our well beloved and right trusty subject, Cecilius Calvert, Baron of Baltimore, being animated with a laudable and pious zeal for extending the Christian religion."

The first recorded statement of Lord Baltimore relative to toleration in Maryland, is found in his letter of 1642 to the Jesuits settled there, which we alluded to in our first paper. He tells them that they are not to expect any more privileges in the colony than they had in England.

Maryland and England in 1642, then, *occupied the same attitude toward Roman Catholics*, if Lord Baltimore told the truth.

"W. M." and "E. D. N." both agree that the Assembly of 1649 was a turning point in the civil and religious history of Maryland.

The act of 1649, relative to religion, I have shown was only an adaptation of a similar act, passed⁽¹⁾ in 1647, by the Parliament of England, then intensely Puritan.

Rev. Thomas Harrison, the former pastor of the Puritans at Providence, afterwards called Annapolis, speaks of the act of 1647 as "that golden apple, the ordinance of toleration."

As soon as possible, in 1648, he visited England, and won the respect of Lord Baltimore; and the next year, with the consent of the Proprietor, the Maryland Assembly passed the Act on Religion.

Charles, Lord Baltimore, in a letter to the Bishop of London, speaking of the Maryland Act of 1649, calls it the "Act of 1647," because shaped after the English statute of that year.

After a fight between the Royalists and Puritans near Annapolis, their difficulties were settled in 1657, by the *Cromwellian Commissioners* making a compact with Lord Baltimore "that he would never assent to the repeal of a law established heretofore in Maryland by his Lordship's consent, whereby all persons professing to believe in Jesus Christ, have freedom of conscience there." That law, so dear to the Puritans, *was the Act of 1649*, which they had used their influence to enact.

It remains proved from the three articles written, I think, that the Maryland Assembly of 1649, which passed what Bishop Gibbons calls a *memorable Act of Religion*, was not Roman Catholic in sentiment.

(1) The phraseology of the English statute that "Holy Church shall have all her rights and liberties", passed into the Maryland Statutes as early as 1638. That "Holy Church" was the Church of England, in the eye of the law, and no other.