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ADDRESS

OF

ARTHUR GEORGE BROWN

AT THE

Commemorative Entertainment

OF THE

MARYLAND SOCIETY OF COLONIAL DAMES

OF AMERICA

Tuesday, March 27th

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## LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

On this 27th day of March—selected because it is the 260th anniversary of the founding of the now vanished town of Saint Mary's—we have met here, at the invitation of the Maryland Society of the Colonial Dames of America.

That Society, incorporated in 1891, is a member of the National Society, which has sub-divisions in the thirteen original States and the District of Columbia.

Its constitution eloquently says : “Whereas, History shows that successive generations are awakened to truer patriotism and stimulated to nobler endeavour by the contemplation of the heroic deeds of their forefathers, and that the remembrance of a nation's glory in the past is essential to national greatness in the future ; *therefore*, recognizing the responsibility which rests upon the decendants of those men and women who in the Colonial period and in the struggle which secured for us our liberty and our Constitution sacrificed their all for their country, to emulate the virtues of our forefathers, we do hereby associate ourselves under the title of “The Colonial Dames of America.”

“Its object shall be” \* \* \* \* “to diffuse healthful and intelligent information in whatever concerns the past and tends to create popular interest in American history, and with a true spirit of patriotism seek to inspire genuine love of country in every heart within its range of influence ; and to teach the young that it is a sacred obligation to do justice and honor to heroic ancestors whose ability, valor, sufferings and achievements are beyond all praise.”

Such an undertaking, in the hands of the good and able women who have formed this association, with such objects, is certain of success, and we men must be content to follow afar off, (as in these latter days we have learned to do,) and aid our betters only with sympathy and encouragement ; even at the risk of throwing serious discredit upon that high sounding motto, “Fatti Maschij Parole Femine,” which forms a part of the heraldic blazonry of the State.

But then, in extenuation for that ancient and now obsolete phrase, we must not forget that it was attached to the Calvert arms centuries ago, in England; and without opportunity for acquaintance with the fair and capable daughters of Maryland, who constitute to-day, the world over, as they have ever done, her highest title to honor and distinction.

Therefore, by command of these ladies of the Maryland Society of Colonial Dames, I shall have the honor of saying a few words, intended to be appropriate to this day and occasion.

In the library of the Maryland Historical Society—on the same frame which sustains the portraits of those lordly members of the House of Calvert, who were almost kings, and owned and ruled, in succession, their Province of Maryland—hangs an old engraving, the history of which is as curious as it is interesting.

These explanatory words appear, engraved upon the margin of the picture:

“In the Elysium one of the series of pictures on Human Culture in the great room of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, etc., at the Adelphi, a mistake was committed, owing to the delusion which has been so generally spread concerning William Penn as the first colonizer who established equal laws of Religious and Civil Liberty. This design is therefore added to the Series, in order to rectify the mistake in the groupe of Legislators, by making Lyeurgus looking at those exemplary laws as placed in the hands of Cecilius Calvert, Baron of Baltimore, who was the original establisher of them in his colony of Maryland, many years before William Penn and his colony arrived in America to copy the worthy example. Designed, engraved and published by James Barry, R. A., Professor of Painting to the Royal Academy, February 28, 1793.”

That artist, who painted, in the building called the Adelphi in London, the elaborate and extensive series of pictures referred to, in the second volume of his published works, thus refers to and further explains his engraving:

“I shall, to the best of my power, make honorable amends to Lord Baltimore for my error: it is not now possible to

alter that part of the picture of Elysium, nor of the print, they must remain as they are, a monument of the general delusion in which I have participated. But I have made a new design for that part, where the matter is as it should be, and I shall, with God's blessing, publish a print of it very shortly."

This high estimate of Cecilus, written a century ago, and often since in many forms and by many writers expressed, is amply confirmed by the latest historian of Maryland, and biographer of her founders, Dr. William Hand Browne, of Johns Hopkins University, whose labors and researches have illumined, more than those of any other scholar, the archives of his native State.

In his history, Dr. Browne says :

"Baltimore was no indifferentist in matters of religion. That he was a sincere Catholic is shown by the fact that all the attacks upon his rights were aimed at his faith, as the most vulnerable point. That he was a papist, and Maryland a papist colony, a nursery of Jesuits and plotters against Protestantism, was the endless burden of his enemies' charges. He had only to declare himself a Protestant to be placed in an unassailable position; yet that step he never took, even when ruin seemed certain. But he was singularly free from bigotry, and he had had bitter knowledge of the fruits of religious dissension; and he meant from the first, so far as in him lay, to secure his colonists from them. His brother Leonard, and those who were associated with him in the government, shared his spirit, and from the foundation of the colony no man was molested under Baltimore's rule on account of religion. Whenever the Proprietary's power was overthrown, religious persecution began, and was checked so soon as he was reinstated."

Formerly, as you are well aware, there was much discussion as to the respective shares of the people through their Assembly, and of Lord Baltimore, in the famous and noble Maryland Act of Toleration which was passed in 1649 and became part of the Statute law of the Colony; and comment has been made and detraction founded upon the fact that it was not adopted until fifteen years after the landing at St. Mary's.

But happily now, for the truth of history and for the just reputations of illustrious men, all excuse for question or criticism on that subject has been removed by the recent remarkable discovery of some of the long-lost Calvert papers. Among them is the original draft, in Lord Baltimore's writing, with his own erasures and corrections, of the instructions to his brother Leonard for the conduct of the expedition which was then about to set sail in the "Ark" and the "Dove," and for the government of the colony.

First, and especially, "His Lordship requires his said Governor and Commissioners that in their voyage to Maryland they be very careful to preserve unity and peace amongst all the passengers on Shipp-board, and that they Suffer no scandall nor offence to be given to any of the Protestants," \* \* \* \* "and that they instruct all the Roman Catholiques to be silent upon all occasions of discourse concerning matters of Religion; and that the said Governor and Commissioners treat the Protestants with as much mildness and favor as Justice will permitt. And this to be observed at Land as well as at Sea."

This, preceded in England by the Proprietary's published invitation to colonists, and followed in Maryland by his proclamation prohibiting "all unseasonable disputations in point of religion tending to the disturbance of the public peace and quiet of the colony, and to the opening of faction in religion," and the sentence and punishment in 1638 and in 1642 of certain Roman Catholics who were guilty of offensive words or acts towards Protestants—of which the judicial records now remain—and by the strict and searching oaths of office which, beginning in 1636, were administered to the Governor and to the Judges of the Courts, establish beyond question the fact that religious liberty and toleration, and consequent unity and peace, existed in and after the year 1634 in the colony of Maryland, and nowhere else, simply because Cecilius Calvert—whose sovereign title, as one of the rulers of the earth, was Absolute Lord of the Land of Maryland and of Avalon, Baron of Baltimore—was a wise, just and clement ruler, who feared God and loved his fellow men, and



a statesman who was far, very far indeed, in advance of his time and his native country.

Let us, therefore, never weary of recalling that great fact ; and, in so doing, let us never fail to lift our hearts in grateful acknowledgement to him who, having finished his course more than two centuries ago, ceased to be the Absolute Lord of Maryland, but who has ever since been and will ever be one of "the dead, but sceptered sovereigns, who still rule our spirits from their urns." Truly may we now say of him : "Those whom thou should'st call thy peers.

Sit on the splendid benches of all time."

Such, then, were the conditions under which Christian civilization was founded here, on land which had been honestly purchased from the Indian owners and with their favor. And well may we so characterize the polity of the Baltimores, for it included not only toleration in matters of religion, but the first government ever established in a British province in which the people were regularly and formally called upon to aid through their assembly ; and it not only protected and conciliated the whites, but—in a measure therefore unknown—the Indians also. It is even recorded that the first printing press ever worked in any British colony was set up in Maryland, where it was early used by the devoted Jesuit Fathers to print a grammar, vocabulary and catechism, the last in several Indian dialects, which the learned Father Andrew White prepared, to aid their missionary work, after he had himself mastered the Indian tongues.

That eminent man, who has been well classed among the Apostles to the Indians, had meekly borne his Master's cross in many lands, before it became his high privilege to raise it here, on Saint Clement's isle, as he himself narrates, "on the day of the Annunciation of the Most Holy Virgin Mary in the year 1634 ;" and several times, before he was called to his reward, he came near attaining the transcendent glory of the martyr's crown. For what those, outside his order and beyond the pale of his own church, know of him, we are largely indebted to a learned clergyman, now deceased, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Reverend Dr. Dal-

rymple of this city, who edited for the Maryland Historical Society, Father White's "Relatio Itineris in Marylandiam," and has traced the outlines of the life of his Jesuit brother—concerning whom Dr. Dalrymple says: "His self-denial, privations and sufferings, and the touching patience and cheerfulness, with which they were all endured, move our profound respect and admiration. Father White deserves a high place of honor amongst the many heroic missionaries of the Society of Jesus."

Such, then, were the auspicious conditions under which the good seed of civilization was planted in the fertile soil of Maryland; and now, after the lapse of two hundred and sixty years, we must ask ourselves what has the harvest been?

That same Father White, in his *Relatio*, after describing, in words, which are as simple as they are graceful and appropriate, the events to which we have only been able to give a passing glance, suddenly, and with an almost startling impressiveness, wrote this solemn declaration: "The finger of God is in this, and He purposes some great benefit to this nation."

Has that remarkable prophecy been fulfilled?

Traversing that long stretch of intervening years, and halting half way, we find a landmark set up at the year 1769, by William Eddis, Surveyor of the Customs, at Annapolis who published afterwards in London a book now somewhat rare, and not so widely known as it deserves to be, entitled "Letters from America Historical and Descriptive; Comprising occurrences from 1769 to 1777 Inclusive."

In his "Introduction" Mr. Eddis said: "The author arrived on the American Continent in the year 1769, and settled at Annapolis, under the patronage and protection of the then Governor of Maryland; from his situation there, he became intimately acquainted with the leading characters of every party in that province, and with every event which occurred subsequent to his own arrival, until the unfortunate misunderstanding, which arose between the parent state and the colonies, rendered it impossible for every one, like him sincerely and steadily attached to the former, to continue in the country."

This intelligent and kindly observer describes a community, with varied pursuits and interests, prosperous and enterprising, and contented—until the Revolution was near at hand—and exhibiting a degree of refinement which is remarkable, considering the fact that less than one hundred and forty years had elapsed since the first settlement.

A few extracts may be appropriate, presenting, as they do, pleasing and authentic pictures of Maryland Colonial life. He said: "The colonists are composed of adventurers, not only from every district of Great Britain and Ireland, but from almost every other European government, where the principles of liberty and commerce have operated with spirit and efficacy. Is it not, therefore, reasonable to suppose, that the English language must be greatly corrupted by such a strange intermixture of various nations? The reverse is, however, true. The language of the immediate descendants of such a promiscuous ancestry is perfectly uniform, and unadulterated; nor has it borrowed any provincial, or national accent, from its British or foreign parentage.

For my part, I confess myself totally at a loss to account for the apparent difference, between the colonists and persons under equal circumstances of education and fortune, resident in the mother country."

Referring to Annapolis he wrote: "In a former letter, I attempted to convey some idea of the truly picturesque and beautiful situation of our little capital. Several of the most opulent families have here established their residence; and hospitality is the characteristic of the inhabitants. Party prejudices have little influence on social intercourse; the grave and ancient enjoy the blessings of a respectable society, while the young and gay have various amusements to engage their hours of relaxation, and to promote that mutual connection so essential to their future happiness."

Describing the social life of provincial Maryland, Mr. Eddis wrote on Christmas Eve in 1771: "The quick importation of fashions from the mother country is really astonishing. I am almost inclined to believe, that a new fashion is adopted earlier by the polished and affluent American, than by many opulent persons in the great metropolis; nor are opportu-

nities wanting to display superior elegance. We have varied amusements, and numerous parties, which afford to the young, the gay, and the ambitious, an extensive field to contend in the race of vain and idle competition. In short, very little difference is, in reality, observable in the manners of the wealthy colonist and the wealthy Briton. Good and bad habits prevail on both sides the Atlantic."

Speaking of the Maryland Society of the Colonial Dames of America, as it existed then, Mr. Eddis said :

"It is but justice to confess, that the American ladies possess a natural ease and elegance in the whole of their deportment ; and that while they assiduously cultivate external accomplishments, they are still anxiously attentive to the more important embellishments of the mind. In conversation they are generally animated, and entertaining, and deliver their sentiments with affability and propriety. In a word, there are, throughout these colonies, very many lovely women, who have never passed the bounds of their respective province, and yet, I am persuaded, might appear to great advantage in the most brilliant circles of gaiety and fashion."

And lastly, before we take leave of Mr. Eddis, let me quote this important passage from a letter written in 1772 : "The natives of these provinces, even those who move in the humbler circles of life, discover a shrewdness and penetration, not generally observable in the mother country. On many occasions, they are inquisitive, even beyond the bounds of propriety ; they discriminate characters with the greatest accuracy ; and there are few who do not seem perfectly conversant with the general and particular interests of the community. An idea of equality also seems generally to prevail, and the inferior order of people pay but little external respect to those who occupy superior stations."

And now, parting company with Mr. Eddis, we come to answer, very briefly, with reference to our own time, the question which has been asked.

It does not become us to exaggerate either our merits as citizens of Maryland or our shortcomings. Concerning both, we have often heard enough.

But, recognizing the applicability, alike to the lives of States and of individuals, of that profound saying "the child is father of the man," we may, in passing, note a few of the characteristics which mark us now, to-day, as the descendants and successors of the men and women who were the founders.

"The hills and vales of pleasant Maryland," with all the wealth of her singularly varied flora remain, for our delight and profit, just as they were when they gladdened the eyes and hearts of the first voyagers; and now, as then, over her unrivalled water ways, "Potomac calls to Chesapeake."

Happily situated, between the North and the South, she partakes—in all physical features, and in the constitution of her people—of the qualities of both.

Her population is as singularly varied as her counties, and some of the races which owe her allegiance and live under her protection are, in nature and condition, as broadly distinguished, and as wide apart as Worcester and Allegany.

And yet, varied and diverse as are the elements which constitute our State, the resultant of them and of their social forces is one harmonious whole.

In peace and plenty, enjoying an average of comfort so high—climate, abundance, and all things else considered—that it is almost unique, self-respecting, patriotic and intelligent, the good citizens of Maryland, of all classes and churches, pass their lives; protected in their own rights, and justly regarding the rights of others. No other example, so conspicuous, exists the world over, of the harmonizing and cohesive power of republican institutions, when administered in that tolerant spirit, which was the free gift of the Founders of Maryland, and is now our priceless and inalienable inheritance.

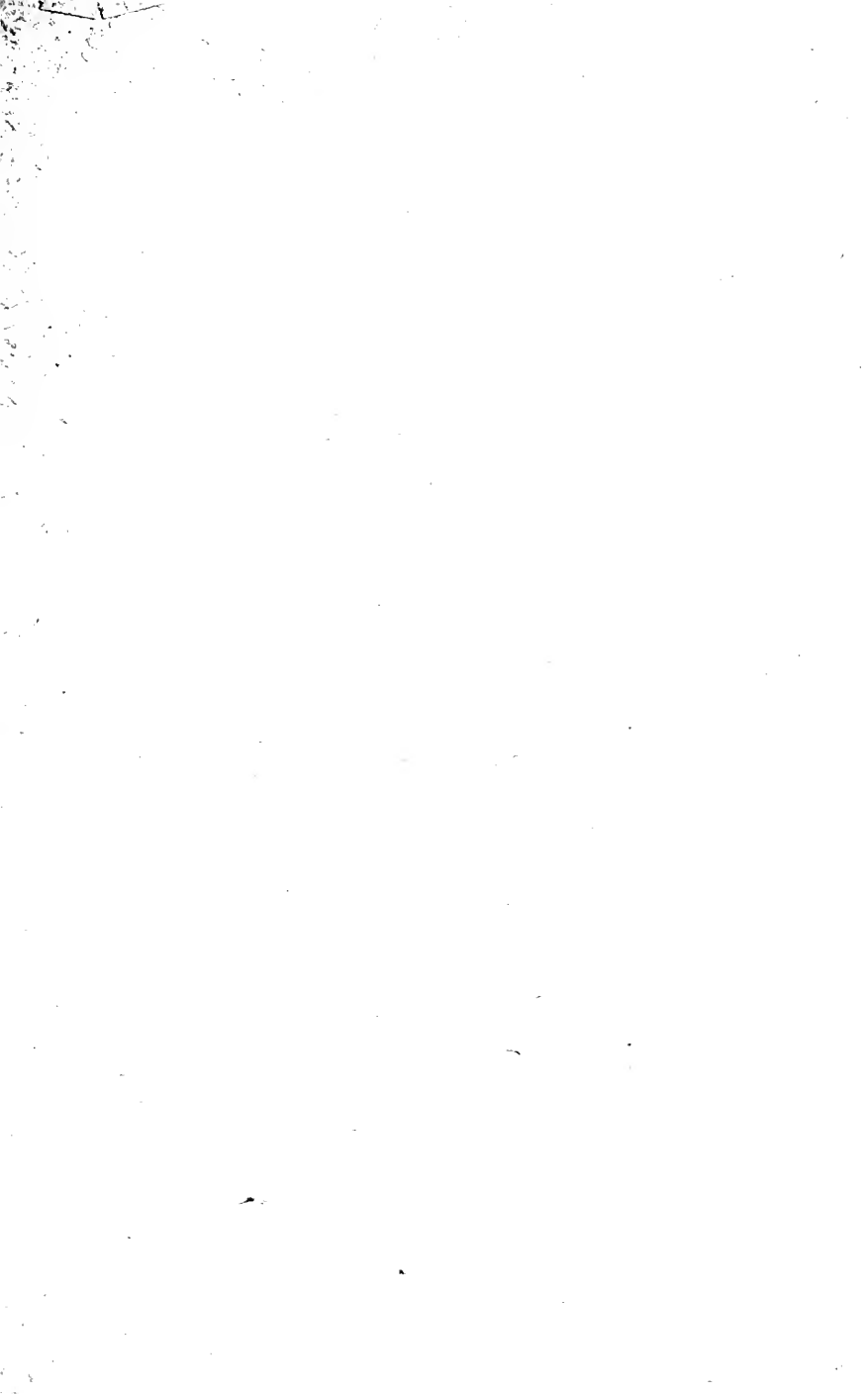
Honoring them, and meeting to commemorate their good deeds in this joyful week—when Lady Day and Easter have come together—with the message brought by Gabriel, and also the words of that other angel who said, and still says, "unto the women, Fear not ye," "He is not here; for he is risen," both ringing in our ears; remembering that on that 27th day of March in 1634 "religious liberty attained a home

—its only home in the wide world—at the humble village which bore the name of Saint Mary's," and that to-day the home of that same blessed principle is almost everywhere—we may proclaim that to Maryland, and from Maryland to the whole civilized world has come the Prince of Peace.

And as for us, her children, remembering all that our Mother State—this fair and benignant Land of Mary—has been and is for us, and that her birth day is the feast of the Annunciation, we too may join our voices to the "Hail" of the heavenly messenger, and salute her, with one acclaim, *Ave! Maria.*

And adopting that ascription which Cæcilius Calvert himself borrowed from his own Vulgate version of the Psalms—in order that he might inscribe the words around the border of his shield—let us, with full and thankful hearts, avow this day, with him, "Scuto Bonæ Voluntatis Tuæ Coronasti Nos."

For Calvert, those words implied a *prophecy*: for us, they express a beneficent *fulfilment*.



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