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LIGHT THROWN BY THE JESUITS UPON HITHERTO
OBSCURE POINTS OF EARLY MARYLAND
HISTORY.

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READ BEFORE DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN HISTORY, MINNESOTA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

BY REV. EDWARD D. NEILL.

The "Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus" with accompanying documents have been published in London, under the careful supervision of Henry Foley, one of their Order.

While the six large volumes of this work pertain largely to the disturbed period in England, from the days of Queen Elizabeth to the accession of William and Mary, yet there are dispersed through the many pages, facts of value to the student of American history.

More than one hundred and fifty years ago, Oldmixon and other chroniclers began to write in a careless way of the Province of Maryland, and because Cecil Calvert, the Second Lord Baltimore, its Proprietor, was an adherent of the Church of Rome, an impression went abroad that a number of gentlemen, chiefly Roman Catholics and their servants, sought the shores of the Potomac in order to worship God in peace. Soon a mythical statement was formulated, that the Charter of Maryland was a charter of religious liberty, and that the first act for toleration in religion was passed A. D. 1649, by a Maryland Legislature.

After the independence of the United States of America was recognized, the early historians of the Republic had not access to original documents, and were obliged to depend upon the loose statements found in geographical gazetteers, and in articles published in the "London" and "Gentleman's Magazine."

Even Mr. Baneroft, our distinguished living historian, in



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the first editions of his valuable work, was misled, and wrote that "religious liberty obtained a home, its only home in the wide world, at the humble village which bore the name of Saint Mary." The last edition of his History of the United States, however, shows a more intimate acquaintance with the early records, and his words are more like words of truth and soberness. The writers of our school histories, however, continue to retain the stereotyped formula, and even Scharf, in the latest and largest if not the best "History of Maryland," writes: "The evidence leads to the conclusion that the Colony, though containing many non-catholics, was a Roman Catholic settlement originally, and so continued until 1649, when the great Toleration Act was published." In a little book published by Munsell, of Albany, during the centennial year of the Republic, called the "Founders of Maryland," it was clearly shown that Thomas Cornwallis, called by Bozman "the guardian genius of the Colony," and other master minds of the infant settlement were Protestants, not Roman Catholics, and there are Parliamentary documents in which Cornwallis declares that he sympathized with Richard Ingle, the commander of the first Parliament ship which appeared in Maryland waters, although, subsequently, he disagreed with this London captain.

Statements, differing from those taught in our school days, have been hitherto received with distrust, and the originators thereof have been charged with illiberality, Puritanism, or hatred of Roman Catholics. Happily, the vexed questions in connection with the earliest chapter of Maryland History have been settled by the publication, in the "Records" to which we have referred, of two papers, from the collection of Jesuit Manuscripts at Stonyhurst.

The first, supposed by the learned editor to have been written by the Jesuit Father, Andrew White, who landed A. D. 1634, with the first immigrants at the Indian village on a tributary of the Potomac, and in 1645 was captured by Captain Ingle, under a commission from Parliament, and taken to London, contains the following statements which will satisfy the fair-minded, that in the first days of the Maryland

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Province, religious liberty was not enjoyed. The language is most explicit. It is: "In a country like this, newly planted and depending upon England for its subsistence, where there is not, nor can be, until England is re-united to the Church, any ecclesiastical district established by the laws of the Prince, or granted by the Prince, nor permanent Synod held, nor spiritual courts erected, nor the canon law accepted, nor ordinary or other ecclesiastical persons admitted, as such, nor the Catholic religion publicly allowed. And whereas three parts of the people or [of?] four, at least, are heretics, I desire to be resolved."

Here is a positive statement as to the overwhelming preponderance of the Protestant element among the first settlers, and also that the adherents of the Church of Rome were not allowed places of public worship, and contradicts the statement in the last edition of Bancroft, that "toleration grew up in the Province silently, as a custom of the land."

The other documents, written in 1642, by the Provincial of the Society of Jesus in England to the Propaganda at Rome, is strongly corroborative, and proves that the early colonists were troubled by religious dissensions. He writes of the people that the "greater part were heretics," that the country was "esteemed to be a New England," and that "greater dangers threaten our Fathers, in a foreign, than in their native land of England," and that they cannot expect "sustenance from heretics hostile to the faith, nor from the Catholics who are for the most part poor, nor from the savages who live after the manner of wild beasts."

He also adds: "For since the said Baron [Baltimore] was unable to govern Maryland in person, he appointed his substitute, Mr. Leugar, his Secretary, who was formerly a minister and preacher, and being converted to the faith, retains much of the leaven of Protestantism, for he still maintains those dogmas, so justly offensive to Catholic ears, that no external jurisdiction was given by God to the Supreme Pontiff, but merely an internal one, in foro conscientiae, etc."

Then follows the direct statement that the first General Assembly, held under the Secretary, was "*composed with few*

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exceptions of heretics, and presided over by himself, in the name of the Lord Baltimore, to pass the following laws repugnant to the Catholic faith and ecclesiastical immunities: that no virgin can inherit, unless she marries before twenty-nine years of age; that no ecclesiastic shall be summoned in any cause, civil or criminal, before other than a secular judge; that no ecclesiastic shall enjoy any privilege, except such as he is able to show *ex Scriptura*; nor to gain any thing for the Church, except by the gift of the Prince; nor to except any site for a church or cemetery; nor any foundation from a convert Indian King; nor shall any one depart from the Province, even to preach the Gospel to Infidels, by the authority of the See Apostolic, without a licence from the lay magistrate."

The firmness of the Jesuits, the letter continues, "greatly enraged" the Secretary, and he "began to turn his attention to the expulsion of the Fathers."

It remains to be seen whether the compilers of school histories will conform to the facts above stated, or continue to repeat the old story, of Maryland being a Roman Catholic Colony, and the first home of religious liberty upon the continent of North America.

The "Mr. Leugar" spoken of in the letter to the Propaganda was John Lewger, a native of London, and a fellow-student of Cecil Calvert in Trinity College, Oxford, which he entered in 1616, and six years later received the degree of Master of Arts. Turning his attention to Theology, he received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity at the same time as the celebrated Phil. Nye, a member subsequently of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. In 1632 he was Rector of a parish in Essex, but by the influence of Chillingworth, a god-son of Archbishop Laud, became an adherent of the Church of Rome. In a little while, however, Chillingworth repented of his position, and came back to the Church in which he was educated, and was anxious that Lewger should also retrace his steps. He published a letter called "Reasons against Popery, in a letter from Mr. William Chillingworth, to his friend Mr. Lewger, persuading him to return to his

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mother, the Church of England, from the corrupt Church of Rome." The effort failed, and Lewger's classmate, now the second Lord Baltimore, in April, 1637, appointed him Secretary of Maryland. He arrived in the Province, the next November, with his wife and son John, nine years of age. His duties were varied and important. In addition to those as Secretary, he was Receiver of Rents, Privy Councillor, Attorney General, and Judge in cases testamentary and matrimonial. During his residence in Maryland his wife had two daughters, Cicely and Elizabeth. In a few years his wife died, and he then went back to England, and became a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, and lived with his constant friend Lord Baltimore.

If we would understand the early history of Maryland we must remember that Lord Baltimore has left on record a letter to the Earl of Strafford in which he states that the object of his colony was to promote his worldly interests. Cecil Calvert inherited but little from his father George, the Proprietor of Avalon, in New Foundland. When Charles the First, in February, 1638, ordered the nobility of Yorkshire and other of the northern counties to retire to their estates, Baltimore writes a letter to the Secretary of State, in which he expresses his willingness to sacrifice his life and his fortune for his Majesty, but he asks a dispensation in his favor: "Because," says he, "my wife has not, I protest to you, stirred out of her chamber these three months last past through illness, and I have little hope that she can be able to make any such journey as unto Yorkshire, where my house is, by the 1st of next month. Nor, indeed, am I any way persuaded to live there with my family, where I never resided in my life, nor seen so much as my land there in ten years, it all being rented out together with my house to tenants."

Wardour Castle, the seat of the Earl Arundel, where Cecil, Lord Baltimore, resided with his father-in-law, was rich with ancestral associations, but the old Earl was very poor in this world's goods. When fourscore years of age, under date of February 17, 1638-39, he writes to the King: "Moneys I have none, no, not to pay the interest of the debts. My plate

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is placed at pawn. My son, Baltimore, is brought so low with his setting forward the plantation of Maryland, and with the claims and oppositions which he has met with, as that I do not see how he could subsist, if I did not give him diet for himself, wife, children."

When the Jesuits began to convert and obtain grants of land from Indian chiefs on the Potomac, in the name of their agents, and to claim that they were not obliged to conform to the regulations of the land office of the Province, it is easy to see why Baltimore's Secretary desired their expulsion, and why everything was not altogether lovely.

APPENDIX.

For the convenience of historical students, there is appended the full text of the documents alluded to in the above article, extracted from vol. 3d, pp. 362-367, "Records of the English Province of the Society of Jesus," by Henry Foley, S. J. London: Burns & Bates, 1878.

The Editor prefaces the first with these remarks:—

"In volume IV., Stonyhurst MSS., *Anglia*, n. 108 B, is a paper headed 'Cases' containing a list of twenty propositions of canon law for the advice of Propaganda, which were probably written by Father White, and sent through the Provincial Father Blount.

"These propositions arose out of the oppressive conduct of the Secretary of Lord Baltimore, in whose charge he had left the infant colony during his temporary absence.¹ They are referred to in the letter of the Reverend Father Provincial, in Rome, which commences thus"—

"In a country like this, newly planted, and depending wholly upon England for its subsistence, where there is not (nor can be until England is reunited to the Church) any ecclesiastical discipline established by laws of the province, or granted by the Prince, nor provincial synod held, nor spiritual courts created, nor the canon laws accepted, nor ordinary, or other ecclesiastical persons admitted (as such), nor the Catholic religion publicly allowed. And whereas three parts of the people or four, at least, are heretics, I desire to be resolved."

"Then follow various questions to be solved. In the same volume of MSS., n. 108 n, is the form of a special agreement to be entered into between the Father Provincial of the English Province and the Lord Cecil Baltimore, his heirs and successors. This first recites that 'the King of England had granted the province of Maryland, with royal jurisdiction therein to the said

¹ Father Foley shows a singular ignorance of history; Cecil, Lord Baltimore, was never a resident of Maryland.—E. D. N.

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Lord Baltimore, by force whereof no English subject, even a colonist of Maryland was capable of accepting, buying, &c., any land, unless by licence of the said Baron or his heirs; and since the said Baron had incurred and was still incurring great expenses, and daily underwent many troubles and dangers, both of person and property, chiefly on account of propagating Christianity in those parts, without having as yet received any fruit or temporal gain, who, however had he failed in his protection of the colony, it never could (humanly speaking) have lasted so long,' &c., it then proceeds in several clauses to make stipulations as to the purchase, &c., of land in the colony: 'And since it is sufficiently clear that Maryland depends upon England, that it could not support itself unless they frequently sent over supplies of necessaries; and since it is not the less evident that, as affairs now are, those privileges, &c., usually granted to ecclesiastics of the Roman Catholic Church, by Catholic Princes in their own countries, could not possibly be granted here without grave offence to the King and State of England (which offence may be called a hazard both to the Baron and especially to the whole colony). Therefore,' &c. The agreement goes on to bind the members of the Society in Maryland not to demand or require any such privileges and exemptions, excepting only those relating to corporal punishments, unless by chance the offence should be a capital one in which degradation would attach; and then provides as to the licence of the Governor for sending out members of the Society to Maryland, and for their removal, &c.

"The labors of the Jesuit missionaries having been greatly blessed in the conversion both of Protestants and native Indians, as we shall see from the Annual Letters of the Province, the enemies of the Catholic faith were aroused,¹ and in the year 1642 a serious assault was made upon the privileges and immunities of the Catholic Church in the colony, by which means they sought to tie the hands of the missionaries. The Fathers resisted the attack as being fatal to the mission, and reported at once to the Vice-Provincial at home (then Father Henry More), who immediately appealed to Propaganda, and wrote the following memorial to the Cardinal Prefect. A copy of it is preserved in MSS., *Anglia*, Vol. IV. n. 108 κ."

Memorial to Cardinal Prefect.

"The Provincial of the Society of Jesus in England humbly represents to your Eminence, that in the month of June, 1632, the King of England granted to the noble Lord Baron Baltimore, a Catholic, in propriety, a certain Province on the sea coast of North America, inhabited by infidels, which at this day is called the Land of Mary, or Maryland, after the reigning Queen of England.

"The said Baron immediately treated with Father Richard Blount, at that time Provincial, at the same time writing to Father General, earnestly begging that he would select certain Fathers, as well for confirming the Catholics in the faith, and converting the heretics who were destined to

¹ Father White says that these enemies were Lord Baltimore and his agents.—E. D. N.

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colonize that country, as also for propagating the faith amongst the infidels and savages. The affair was surrounded with heavy and many difficulties, for in leading the colony to Maryland by far the greater part were heretics, the country itself, *a meridie Virginie ab Aquilone*, is esteemed likewise to be a New England, that is two provinces full of English Calvinists and Puritans; so that no less, nay, perhaps greater dangers threaten our Fathers in a foreign, than in their native land of England. Nor is the Baron himself able to find support for the Fathers, nor can they expect sustenance from heretics hostile to the faith, nor from the Catholics for the most part poor, nor from the savages who live after the manner of wild beasts.

“The zeal of the said Father Provincial conquered these and other difficulties, and at first two Fathers were sent out, as it were, to explore and ascertain if there might be any hope of the gain of souls, when the country should appear ‘white to the harvest.’ Some years ago a geographical description of this country was presented to his Eminence, Cardinal Barberini, Protector, with a humble petition that he would deign to receive the Fathers sent out there under the patronage of his kind protection, equally with the rest in England, so that the matter might be transacted in such a way as to avoid giving offence to the State of England.

“After this the Fathers indeed increased both in numbers and in courage, in sufferings of hunger and want, in frequent diseases which were fatal to some, and lastly through various dangers applied themselves with constancy to the salvation of souls, learnt the savage language which is formed of various dialects, composed a dictionary, a grammar, and a catechism for the use of the infidels; and the Divine Goodness was pleased so to favor these attempts that, besides others, a certain chief, having many tributary kings under him, with his wife and family and some of his ministers, was brought to the faith, and unless hindered by professing Catholics, a great door was laid open to the Gospel.

“Impediments indeed, and these severe ones, did arise, and from those from whom they were least due. For, since the said Baron was unable to govern Maryland in person, he appointed as his substitute a certain Mr. Leugar, his Secretary, who was formerly a minister and preacher, and being converted to the faith retained much of the leaven of Protestantism: for he still maintained those dogmas so justly offensive to Catholic ears—that no external jurisdiction was given by God to the Supreme Pontiff, but merely an internal one *in foro conscientie*; that no immunity for goods or person was due to him or any other ecclesiastics, except such as lay princes and seculars chose to confer upon him or them; that it would be a great offence, and one to be meted by punishment to exercise any jurisdiction whatever, even of absolving from sin, without special licence from the Baron, from whom all lawful jurisdiction was derivable; that a woman making a vow of virginity, and not marrying after the twenty-fifth year of her age, could not hold lands by heirship coming from her parents, but that they must be sold, and if the parties refused to do so, then by compulsory sale. That the General Assembly or Parliament possessed so great an authority over the property of all, that it could dispossess every one it chose of their all, even to the under-garment, for the use of the Republic; and other such like propositions of the said Mr. Leugar are comprehended in twenty questions which are laid before this second Congregation by the hands of the Secretary.

“Therefore the Secretary (Leugar) having summoned the Assembly in Maryland, composed with few exceptions of heretics and presided over by himself, in the name of the Lord Baltimore, attempted to pass the following laws repugnant to the Catholic faith and ecclesiastical immunities: That no virgin can inherit, unless she marries before twenty-nine years of age; that no ecclesiastic shall be summoned in any cause civil or criminal before any other than a secular judge; that no ecclesiastic shall enjoy any privilege,

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except such as he is able to show *ex scriptura*, nor to gain anything for the Church except by the gift of the prince, nor to accept any site for a church or cemetery, nor any foundation from a convert Indian king; nor shall any one depart from the province, even to preach the Gospel to the infidels by authority of the See Apostolic, without a licence from the lay magistrate; nor shall any one exercise jurisdiction within the province, which is not derived from the said Baron, and such like.

“The Fathers of the Society warmly resisted this foul attempt, professing themselves ready to shed their blood in defence of the faith and the liberty of the Church. Which firmness greatly enraged the Secretary, who immediately reported to Baron Baltimore that his jurisdiction was interrupted by the Fathers, whose doctrine was inconsistent with the government of the province. Hence the said Baron, being offended, became alienated in his mind from the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, and at first *ipso facto* seized all their lands and let them to others, as though he was the lord and proprietor of them, although King Patuen had given them the same lands when he was a catechumen, upon the express condition for supporting priests, who had brought his subjects to the true knowledge, faith, and worship of God. The said Baron, with others favorable to his opinions, began to turn his attention to the expulsion of the Fathers, and the introducing others in their stead who would be more pliable to his Secretary. Therefore he procured last year to petition the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, in the name of the Catholics of Maryland, to grant to a Prefect and secular priests faculties for the same mission, making no mention in the meanwhile of the labors of the Fathers undertaken in that harvest, nor expressing the motives which induced him to substitute new missionary priests. And in order that he might have some new grounds to urge for calling away the Fathers of the Society from thence, he proposed certain points similar to those laid before the Sacred Congregation, to be presented to the Provincial by the hands of the Secretary, that he might subscribe them in the name of himself and of the Fathers in Maryland. But the Sacred Congregation, being entirely ignorant of these matters, granted the petition; and in the month of August, 1641, faculties were expedited from the Sacred Congregation and were transmitted to Dom. Rossett, now Archbishop of Tarsus.

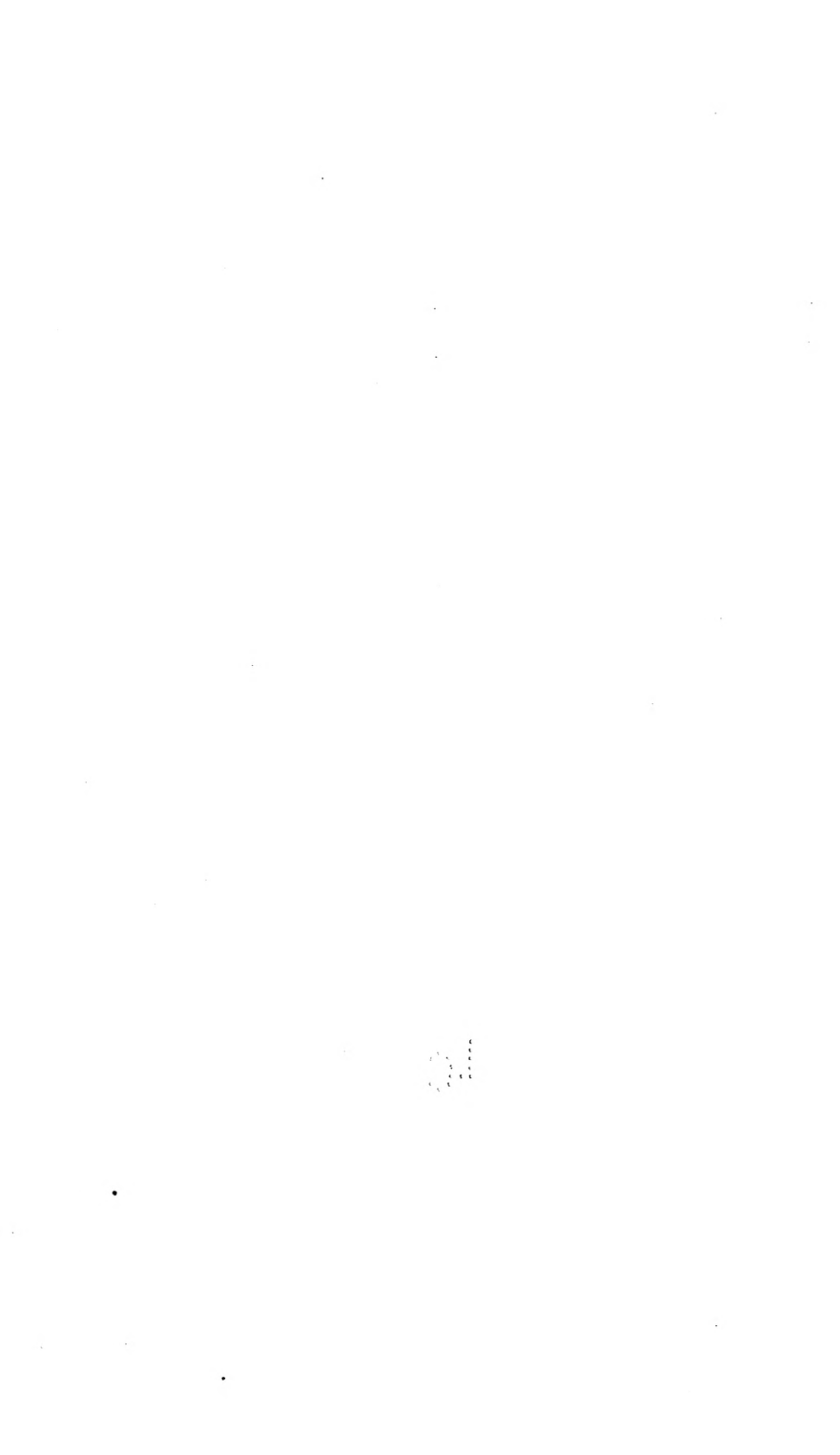
“But since perhaps the other Prefect is not as yet appointed, or the faculties delivered, but are as yet, it is hoped, in the hands of Father Phillips, the confessor of the Queen of England, the said Provincial humbly begs of your Eminence, to deign to direct that the said faculties may be superseded, if the matter is yet entire, or if by chance the faculties are delivered, that the departure of new priests may be retarded for a sufficient space of time to allow the Holy See to decide upon what is best to be done for the good of souls. The Fathers do not refuse to make way for other laborers, but they humbly submit for consideration, whether it is expedient to remove those who first entered into that vineyard at their own expense, who for seven years have endured want and sufferings, who have lost four of their *confères*, laboring faithfully unto death, who have defended sound doctrine and the liberty of the Church with odium and temporal loss to themselves, who are learned in the language of the savages, of which the priests to be substituted by the Baron Baltimore are entirely ignorant, and which priests either allow or defend that doctrine, from which it must needs be that contentions and scandals should arise, and the spark of faith be extinguished which begins to be kindled in the breasts of the infidels. Nevertheless, the Fathers profess themselves ready, with all submission, either to return to England from Maryland, or to remain there and to labor even to death, for the faith and dignity of the Holy See, as may seem fit to the prudence, the goodness, and charity of your Eminence.”

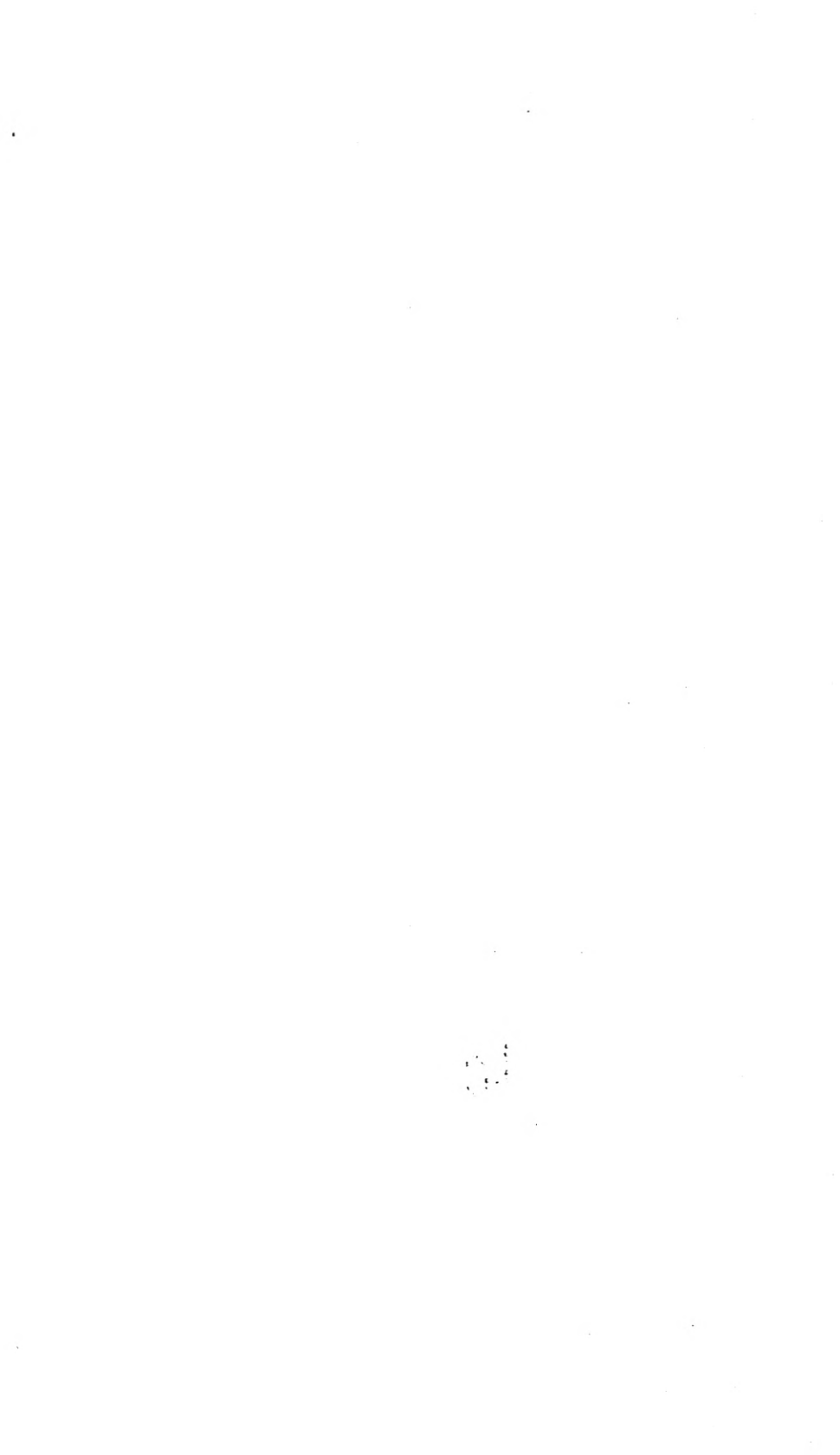
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