

PREFACE.

This volume completes the publication of the two long-lost Council Books, the recovery of which was explained in the preface to the volume containing the Council Proceedings, 1671-1681. They nearly fill up the great lacuna in our archives.

As previously explained, the necessity of dividing this new material into two volumes causes the present to be somewhat smaller in bulk than other volumes of the series; and advantage has been taken of this fact to insert in an appendix some original documents belonging to the period covered. Among these will be found some characteristically unctuous letters from William Penn, and a report, from the Virginia records, of George Talbott's trial, with his pardon.

During these years the northern Indians gave but little trouble. Treaties were made with the Five Nations, and stipulations, as always, inserted to protect the Pascattoways and other Maryland Indians, who stood in great fear of the Senecas and Susquehannoughs. Some damage was done by small parties on outlying plantations, but an active system of ranging gave general security. The justice and clemency which characterised the dealings of the colonists with the aborigines were no doubt a chief cause that Maryland suffered so little from Indian troubles. An instance of this can be seen in the report of the trial of an Indian culprit (pp. 193, 224). An Eastern Shore Indian who, in a fit of drunkenness, had gone to a colonist's house and attempted to shoot the proprietor, is tried before a special commission. The Indian King whose subject the culprit was, is invited to be present with his great men to see that all things are done in accordance with justice. The evidence as given is interpreted to the Indians, who are asked if they can offer anything in justification, and reply that they cannot. They are then told that by the rigor of the law the prisoner deserves death, but that the authorities are unwilling to exercise the utmost severity. The prisoner is then sentenced to receive thirty-nine lashes, and the Indians are requested to delegate one of their own men to execute it, which is done. The Kings are asked how they will guarantee that the offender will keep the peace in future, upon which they pledge their