

PREFACE.

In February, 1883, the Publication Committee chose William Hand Browne, M. D., as editor of the new series to be entitled the Maryland Archives, in which should be included the records of the Province and of the State, during its earlier years. Scholars know how valuable was the service which Dr. Browne rendered as editor of the thirty-one volumes which appeared during an editorship lasting to the end of his life. His minute and encyclopaedic knowledge of Maryland history, his careful and methodical manner of work, did much toward rescuing from obscurity the events which occurred during the early years of Maryland history and toward preserving the records of those early years from any risk of destruction. When he died in 1912, the Society naturally chose as his successor, that ripe and assiduous scholar in the field of Maryland Provincial History, Clayton C. Hall, A. M., who was then Chairman of the Publication Committee, and who had served upon that Committee since 1890. We hoped that his tenure of that office might be a long one, and the editorship of the three volumes which appeared under his auspices showed how wisely he had been chosen to prepare them.

It was the privilege of the present editor to meet Dr. Browne in the autumn of 1888, and to become a member of his class in the Scottish Poets at the Johns Hopkins University. He was not only my teacher, but also he became my friend, and during the years from 1897 to his death he conferred often concerning problems of editorship with me as a member of the Publication Committee. My friendship with his successor, Mr. Hall, was an hereditary one, for it was due to his initiative and investigations that my father, Lewis H. Steiner, M. D., then State Senator from Frederick County, became interested in and carried through the Legislature the amendment of the State Seal and the return to the Provincial one. During Mr. Hall's editorship we were accustomed to interchange opinions on the proper course to be taken, whenever any question arose which he did not wish to decide without conference. In the early days of May, 1916, at Mr. Hall's request, I went to see him at his country home, and was then told by him that his ill health had caused him to decide that he would resign the editorship of the *Archives*, and that if I would accept the position he would be glad to make the suggestion in his letter of resignation that I be chosen his successor. Closely following this interview, Mr. Hall's health failed rapidly and he died before the close of the month.