

CHAPTER II

THE MARYLAND PATRONAGE

WE MUST CONSTANTLY bear in mind that Maryland's colonial history falls into three unequal periods: fifty-five years of proprietary government (1634-89), a quarter century of royal administration (1690-1715), and another sixty years of proprietary rule (1716-76). Founded in 1634, partly as a Catholic refuge, by its first proprietor, Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore, Maryland suffered an internal uprising in 1689, whereupon its government was taken by the crown. In 1715, however, soon after death of the second proprietor and succession of a Protestant heir, this government was returned to the Calvert family.

During both proprietary periods officers were appointed by Lord Baltimore or his representatives and held place at their pleasure. All funds for support of government were proprietary revenue and were received and disbursed by His Lordship's Agent and Receiver. Under crown administration, on the other hand, the proprietor had no authority over this government or the funds for its support. He retained merely his personal income and the patronage of those offices administering it. Appointment to all other places passed to the crown. All funds for support of government became crown revenue and so were handled by the Crown Receivers.

This period of royal government was one of relative tranquility. After important changes in 1689-96 the constitutional and financial evolution of the province virtually halted. In contrast the proprietary periods saw a progressive unfolding of the administrative system. Prior to 1689 this development, although on the whole constructive, was interrupted by invasions, internal disorders, and the vagaries of the proprietor. The latter period, although disturbed by serious political quarrels, was generally an age of progress. Constitutional development, if slower, was also more constructive. It was marked by a growing complexity in those establishments devoted to provincial finance, proprietary revenues, and royal customs duties.