

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

Baltimore, December 1, 1939.

To the Maryland Historical Society,

GENTLEMEN :

This volume of the *Archives of Maryland*, containing the Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly of Maryland from the autumn of 1758 to the spring of 1761, is presented to the Maryland Historical Society by your Committee on Publications, to which you have entrusted its preparation. It is Volume LVI of the general series, and the twenty-sixth volume of the sub-series dealing with Assembly affairs. It covers all the proceedings of the six sessions of the Assembly, the Lower House of which had been elected by the people in September, 1758. This Assembly terminated its existence when Governor Sharpe and his Council dissolved it in the autumn of 1761, and ordered the issuance of writs for the election of a new lower chamber. Almost no new legislation of a controversial character was enacted by it, except when in a single instance, to save the pockets of members of both the Proprietary and popular parties about to be hit by an additional land tax, both houses reluctantly agreed upon a compromise measure. The laws which were passed were in great part acts which continued in force laws of a non-controversial character about to expire by time limitation. There was a marked reduction in the number of messages and addresses which passed between the Governor and the Upper House on one hand and the Lower House on the other over controversial legislation. Each side had had its say on these questions at recent preceding sessions. Occasionally, however, the Governor, taunted beyond endurance by the ill manners of the Lower House, responded in a message with proper spirit.

The period covered by these Assembly records, the four mid-years of the Seven Years' War, opens just after there had been a turn for the better for the British in the fortunes of war. The low point for Britain in the war in America had been reached on July 8, 1758, with the ignominious defeat of Abercrombie by Montcalm at Ticonderoga. But there was a rapid change for the better when Amherst on July 27th captured Louisburg on Cape Breton Island, and this was followed on September 13th by the fall of Quebec to Wolfe. These victories gave the control of Canada and the Great Lakes to the British. The success of the expedition across Pennsylvania under Brigadier-General John Forbes, in which five hundred Maryland troops took part, resulted in the abandonment of Fort Duquesne by the French and wrested from them the control of the Ohio.

These victories were, however, to have an untoward result in Maryland, for relief from the threat to its frontiers by the French and Indians was to make the Lower House even more truculent and less willing to contribute to the support of the war. Military events in the south now settled into a condition of stagnation which lasted until the end of the war, although the treaty