

the Established Church, all of whom owed their appointments to the Lord Proprietary. Under the law the vestries of the several parishes had no say in the selection of the rector or curate, nor when once inducted, did either the Proprietary, or the Governor, or the vestry have power to remove them. While the great majority of the clergymen of the established church holding benefices in the Province were conscientious and God-fearing men, at this period an unusually large number of disreputable clergymen were an offence to the public. The most conspicuous and notorious of these was the Reverend Bennett Allen, then Rector of All Saints' Parish, Frederick County, and other parishes, who for years kept religious and political affairs in Maryland in an uproar. Another flagrant offender was the Reverend Nathaniel Whitaker, Rector of Coventry Parish, Somerset and Worcester Counties, who had recently died, and who to quote Sharpe, writing in 1768, "by his Sottiness & immoral Behavior had long been considered an intolerable Burthen by the Parishioners" (*Arch. Md.* XIV, 480). We also owe to Sharpe the following picturesque descriptions of three other contemporary clergymen: the Reverend Neill McCullum of Dorchester Parish, Dorchester County; the Reverend Andrew Lendrum, of St. George's Parish, Baltimore County; and the Reverend Richard Brown of King and Queen Parish, St. Mary's County. McCullum who "by reason of his Sottishness has for many years been absolutely unable to officiate in the Church or to discharge any part of his Duty"; Lendrum was "said to be not only an habitual Drunkard but also to live in Adultery"; Brown had been "lately accused of murdering one of his Slaves & actually fled thereupon to Virginia where he remained several Months till his Son, who could be the only positive Witness against him could be ship't away thence to Scotland . . . his Parishioners consider him as a very bad man none of them will even yet attend Divine Service at his Church" (*Arch. Md.* XIV, 480, 507). The immoralities of the Reverend Richard Brown, a native of Charles County, Maryland, are also to be found fully narrated in the report upon him by the Committee on Aggrievances and Courts of Justice, filed in the Lower House on June 22, 1768. It appears that Brown, who had become Rector of King and Queen Parish, in 1751, had lived out of his parish for more than three years, and this without employing a curate to officiate in his stead. Lately returned to his parish "his long course of immoral conduct and his being under a prosecution for the supposed murder of a negro has determined his parishioners universally not to hear him; that the growth of Popery and superstition are, as may be expected, attendant consequences of such remiss and immoral conduct on the part of a clergyman." The committee concluded by saying that their attention had been directed to the matter so late that it could not make as full an inquiry and examination as was called for, but that it felt a "strict inquiry into the causes of the apparent decay of the established religion" in the Province should be made (pp. 410-411). It will be remembered that St. Mary's County was the stronghold of Roman Catholicism in the Province.

The case of the Reverend John Macpherson, a native of Scotland and the Rector of William and Mary Parish, Charles County, who for some time, had been in prison for debt, seems to have involved financial carelessness, rather