



## CHAPTER FOUR

*Evan Jones, Bookseller—The Jones-Bradford Laws of 1718—  
The London Edition of Maryland Laws of 1723—  
Trott's Laws of the Plantations*



LITERARY history of colonial Maryland would have to deal with a community peculiarly sterile in the production of original works of literature. The reasons for this condition are so many that it would be unwise to institute a general discussion of them here. It is well to recall, however, that in Pennsylvania and in the northern colonies the conflict of religious sects and of sects within sects kept the presses busy with the publication of controversial matter, while in Maryland the firm establishment of the Church of England discouraged not only the publication of works of controversy but controversy itself. Until the years immediately preceding the American Revolution, religious speculation was static in Maryland, a circumstance, we may believe, which did not make for unhappiness among the people. Politics was always a matter of interest to the Marylanders, but except in connection with certain important contentions which will be noticed later, discussion of affairs of state rarely took the form of the printed word. There remained, in general, as matter for the employment of the press only the publication of the laws and legislative proceedings, and upon these, as the framework of Maryland printing history, attention is mainly centered throughout the early part of the period under discussion. Because of this close relationship between the printing of Maryland laws and the history of Maryland printing, the present chapter has importance in our narrative in spite of the fact that it has nothing to do directly with the story of any Maryland press.

The death of Thomas Reading in the summer of 1713 left the Province without a printer. In these early years of the century, printers in search of employment were infrequently met with in the colonies. New York had only one establishment at this time, and Pennsylvania, after the passage of several years in which it had been without the services of a printer, had lately induced Andrew Bradford to set up his press in the city where his father