

collect, and promised to

be careful to mention, occasionally, the source of his information, and to avoid, above all things, the confounding of authentic facts with uncertain rumor, or vague surmise;

he would "spread the advertisements of individuals" and he would maintain a strict impartiality in matters of controversy. He apologized for his types, which were "not a little worn," but if he met with reasonable encouragement, he would publish the Maryland Herald "not only on a more beautiful and perfect letter, but on a larger scale."¹³ He had agreed to publish the Maryland Herald as soon as five hundred subscribers were found who would pay two dollars a year;¹⁴ but started with a subscription list of only three hundred.¹⁵

That Cowan's paper did perform a public service in spite of inadequate support is indicated in a letter to the editor, dated Miles River, May, 1791, and signed "Z":

The printer of the Herald (and the writer of this can vouch for the truth) is at once compositor - collator - selector - searcher - worker of press - and devil... The Eastern Shore will, I hope, rouse from the lethargy which has hitherto suppressed their activity, in behalf of the press... If a press is to be of public service, you owe it to yourselves, to your posterity, and your community, to

13 Maryland herald. (Easton) May 11, 1790.

14 Wheeler. op. cit. p. 73.

15 Herald and Eastern shore advertiser. November 13, 1804.