

the most interesting event in connection with Quakerism in America is the foundation by William Penn of the Colony of Pennsylvania, where he hoped to carry into effect the principles of his sect—to found and govern a colony without armies or military powers: to reduce the Indians by justice and kindness to civilization and Christianity; to administer justice without oaths, and to extend an equal freedom to all persons professing theism—such was the “holy experiment,” as Penn called it.

The Quakers, or, as they call themselves, the Society of Friends, present to the student of ecclesiastical history a curious form of Christianity, widely aberrant from the prevalent types, and as a body of worshippers without creed or liturgy, a priesthood or a sacrament. To the student of social science they are interesting as having given to women an equal place with men in their church organization, and as having attempted to eliminate war, oaths and litigation from their midst.

The rise and progress of the Society in Maryland constitutes an episode rather than an integral part of the State's history.

The rise of the Society in America dates between 1644 and 1648. Toward 1657 Josiah Cole and Thomas Thurston reached Virginia, whence they started on foot to Maryland, and were here joined by Thomas Chapman.

The first settlement of the people from the British Islands was made in Maryland in the year 1628, by William Claiborne, who, with 100 or 200 followers, established a trading post on Kent Island, a large body of land projecting from the eastern shore into the bay, and now a portion of Queen Anne's county. This was then, as now, a beautiful and fertile section. Claiborne and his people went there from the James River settlement, Virginia.

In 1632 George Calvert, an Englishman, who had, by his friend, Charles

I., been raised to the title of Lord Baltimore in Ireland, visited America, and obtained from the King a charter for the whole region, including the colony of Swedes on the Delaware River, amounting to 8,000,000 acres of land. George Calvert died, leaving his son Cecilus then a young man, second Lord Baltimore, heir to Maryland. The latter sent his brother, Leonard Calvert, over with a colony, as lieutenant-governor, in 1634, himself never seeing this country. Protestants, Catholics, men of all and no beliefs, fled to the new colony for liberty and life, and little persecution occurred on account of religious beliefs. Civil and religious toleration was granted. A charter came from the King.

From the earliest settlement many Friends were in Maryland. There were 25 or 30 meetings on the shores of the Chesapeake in the 17th century, and in Baltimore Town they composed a large portion of the population more than a century ago.

In 1777 the Yearly Meeting issued its first testimony prohibiting the holding of human beings in bondage, and by a rule of discipline, adopted soon after, Friends were prohibited from hiring slave labor from owners thereof.

The “General Meeting” of Friends in Maryland was founded in the year 1672, 10 years before the landing of William Penn's colony on the Delaware. This meeting was held at West River and Treadhaven alternately, until June 4, 1783, when, in accordance with a minute of adjournment of the meeting at Thirdhaven, it was, for the first time, held in Baltimore Town, and in the old town Meeting-House four years after its erection.

The Lombard-street house was built in 1805. Its history began when Baltimore had a population of only 30,000 persons. Neither George Fox nor William Penn visited Baltimore, but the former made two visits to Anne Arundel and Talbot counties.

The new Meeting-House of the Baltimore Friends, erected in consequence