

men of this Province". A committee of twelve, to which two additional members were soon afterward added, headed by Murdock, was appointed for this purpose (pp. 23, 28). On September 27 this committee brought in its report together with the resolves it had drawn up. These were unanimously approved.

These resolves relative to the Stamp Act were under eight heads. Some of these eight subjects were of the same tenor as those regularly included in the resolutions or resolves adopted by the Lower House at each session following the election of a new Lower House, which have been described as in the nature of a bill of rights and a declaration of independence of Proprietary pretensions by the people of Maryland. In the present instance, however, the resolves adopted in connection with the Stamp Act may be looked upon in the light of a bill of rights and declaration of the independence of the Province from the pretensions of the British government to the right to tax the colonies. The resolves asserted not only the general rights of the people of Maryland as British subjects, but also their peculiar rights and privileges under the Maryland charter, exempting them from taxation except that imposed by themselves. The first resolve asserted that the original settlers had brought with them all the rights of British subjects and had transmitted these rights to their posterity. Second; that the Magna Charta and laws of England, confirmed by "the Petition and Bill of Rights", provided that subjects should not be taxed except by common consent in Parliament. Third; the Royal Charter given in 1632 by Charles I to Cecilius Lord Baltimore granted to those who should settle in Maryland and to their descendants full enjoyment of "all liberties, franchises, and privileges of this our Kingdom of England"; and that at no time thereafter should there be made "or cause to be Set any Imposition Custom or other Taxation . . . within the said Province", and all "Officers and Ministers of us our heirs and Successors" are enjoined on "pain of our high Displeasure that they do not presume at any time to Attempt anything to the Contrary of the Premises". Fourth; "the Charter is Declaratory of the Constitutional Rights and Privileges of the Freemen of this Province". Fifth; that "Tryals by Juries is the Grand Bulwark of Liberty the undoubted Birth-right of every Englishman and Consequently of every British Subject in America and that Erecting Jurisdictions for the Tryal of Matters of fact is unconstitutional" [a reference to the extensive jurisdiction given admiralty courts under the Stamp Act]. Sixth; that it is the "Opinion of this House that it cannot with any truth or Propriety be said that the Freemen of this Province of Maryland are Represented in the British Parliament". Seventh; that "His Majesty's liege People of this Ancient Province have always enjoyed the Right of being Governed by Laws [enacted by themselves] by which they were taxed, and that this right has never been forfeited but has always been recognized by the King and people of Great Britain. Eighth; that it is the "Opinion of this House that the Representatives of the Freemen of this Province in their Legislative Capacity together with the other part of the Legislature have the Sole Right to lay Taxes or Impositions on the Inhabitants", and that the imposition of any tax on them "under Colour of any other Authority is Unconstitutional and a Violation of their Rights" (pp. 31-32).