

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

WE, the People of the State of Maryland, grateful to Almighty God for our civil and religious liberty, and taking into our serious consideration the best means of establishing a good Constitution in this State, for the sure foundation and more permanent security thereof, DECLARE :

Art. 1. That all government of right originates from the people, is founded in compact only, and instituted solely for the good of the whole: and they have at all times according to the mode prescribed in this Constitution, the unalienable right to alter, reform, or abolish their form of Government, in such manner as they may deem expedient.

Art. 2. That the people of this State ought to have the sole and exclusive right of regulating the internal government and police thereof.

Art. 3. That the inhabitants of Maryland are entitled to the common law of England, and the trial by jury according to the course of that law, and to the benefit of such of the English statutes as existed on the fourth day of July, seventeen hundred and seventy-six, and which by experience have been found applicable to their local and other circumstances, and have been introduced, used and practiced by the courts of law or equity, and also of all acts of Assembly in force on the first Monday of November, eighteen hundred and fifty, except such as may have since expired, or may be altered by this Constitution, subject, nevertheless to the revision of, and amendment or repeal by the Legislature of this State; and the inhabitants of Maryland are also entitled to all property derived to them from or under the charter, granted by his Majesty Charles the First to Cæcilius Calvert, Baron of Baltimore.

Art. 4. That all persons invested with the legislative or executive powers of government are the trustees of the public, and as such accountable for their conduct; whenever the ends of government are perverted, and public liberty manifestly endangered, and all other means of redress are ineffectual, the people may, and of right ought to reform the old or establish a new government; the doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power and oppression is ab-

surd, slavish and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind.

Art. 5. That the right of the people to participate in the Legislature is the best security of liberty, and the foundation of all free government; for this purpose elections ought to be free and frequent, and every free white male citizen having the qualifications prescribed by the Constitution, ought to have the right of suffrage.

Art. 6. That the legislative, executive and judicial powers of government ought to be forever separate and distinct from each other; and no person exercising the functions of one of said departments shall assume or discharge the duties of any other.

Art. 7. That no power of suspending laws, or the execution of laws, unless by or derived from the Legislature, ought to be exercised or allowed.

Art. 8. That freedom of speech and debate or proceedings in the Legislature, ought not to be impeached in any court of judicature.

Art. 9. That Annapolis be the place for the meeting of the Legislature; and the Legislature ought not to be convened or held at any other place but from evident necessity.

Art. 10. That for the redress of grievances, and for amending, strengthening and preserving the laws, the Legislature ought to be frequently convened.

Art. 11. That every man hath a right to petition the Legislature for the redress of grievances in a peaceable and orderly manner.

Art. 12. That no aid, charge, tax, burthen, or fees, ought to be rated or levied, under any pretence, without the consent of the Legislature.

Art. 13. That the levying of taxes by the poll is grievous and oppressive and ought to be abolished: that paupers ought not to be assessed for the support of government, but every other person in the State, or person holding property therein, ought to contribute his proportion of public taxes, for the support of government, according to his actual worth in real or personal property; yet fines, duties or taxes may properly and justly be imposed or laid, on persons or property, with a political view, for the good government and benefit of the community.