

term of years, life, lives, or otherwise.

Here is no limitation of the amount, either in form or substance. And this is the great feature of the Bill which Federal ingenuity (concentrated, as we may suppose it to be, in the address to the people of Frederick County) can neither palliate nor disguise; altho' its authors have had the temerity to defy their opponents to point out any difference of principle whatever between this act and those which have been passed concerning the property of other religious societies.

In reviewing the several laws which have been referred to in this address, it is impossible not to notice the palpable and gross misrepresentations which are made as to the operation and effect of those concerning the Roman Catholic congregations.

The first act, passed in 1792, chap. 55, which is alleged not to limit the amount or specify the estates to be conveyed.

The preamble to that act states, that certain property had been applied to the use, support, and maintenance of ministers of the Roman Catholic religion, although held and possessed by certain individuals as legal proprietors, but under a confidential or implied trust. It is there declared that every legal proprietor held or possessed on or before the 14th of August 1776, under such trust, or of property acquired since in exchange for property so held, may, by writing declare the purposes for which it was held; and the corporate body is thereupon to be seized and possessed of such property in as full and ample a manner as the persons making the said declaration.

But, that is certain which can be made certain.

The act refers to certain specified property; and in the act on the same subject passed in 1803, chapter 115, the names of the three clergymen who had made such declarations of the uses to which the lands had been held, are stated.

The corporation is not enabled to purchase or receive any other property; and supposing the value of what they have to be as great as these gentlemen state it to be, it is still brought within some bounds or limits.

By the act of 1793, chap. 15. The members of the Roman Catholic congregation at Baltimore were incorporated, and empowered to purchase and hold any property, real, personal, or mixed, which by the constitution and Laws of this State, may be acquired and held by religious societies.—This, the Federal delegates say, is a description of all kinds of property which this corporation may hold, but that there is no limitation as to the amount.

Can it be conceived that gentlemen of the high consideration which we know they have assumed to themselves, have reflected on the risk of advancing such an opinion? are they willing thus to commit their characters, and to forfeit their pretensions either to knowledge or to candor?

The meaning of the act cannot be otherwise than willfully mistaken.

The Catholics, considered as a religious sect, had not, before the act of 1792, been empowered by law to hold any property. That act had enabled them to hold a general fund: but the property asked for and granted by the act of 1793, extended only to the exception in the concluding part of the section of the bill of rights, which has been cited, to wit, any quantity of land not exceeding two acres, for a church, meeting, or other houses of worship, and for a burying ground. The sole intent of the act was, that such property, which had been before in the confidential possession of private persons, or which might be procured for the same purpose, should be securely held by a corporate body.

If it was proposed not to limit the amount, why was the clause inserted respecting the constitution and laws of the state, and why was it omitted in the act to incorporate the Protestant Episcopal Church? I shall not dwell upon the account that is given of the manner in which this act was introduced, although there is reason to doubt the correctness of the statement. It may readily be believed that some members voted for it without a full knowledge of its tendency. They will see their error; but on those who still advocate its principles let your just indignation fall.

SIDNEY.

The Maryland Republican.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY
JOHN W. BUTLER,
NEARLY OPPOSITE THE FARMERS' BANK, ANNAPOLIS.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1809.

For the Maryland Republican.

THE EXAMINER.

(Continued from our last.)

THE preceding observations have been made with that freedom which was promised in their commencement, and which the occasion has required. An attack on the government of the country, originating in no adequate or justifiable cause, and conducted without moderation, candor, or decency, is not to be repelled by cold and timid reasoning. The vigor of the defence must bear some proportion to that of the assault. If the assailants employ artillery, they must not be opposed with pebble-stones; or, to come nearer the mark, if they throw dirt, they are not to be answered with amber and incense.—I have therefore spoken of the federal party without ceremony or reserve, and have, indeed, described it under its worst aspect; that is to say, I have taken its character from that of the persons by whom it submits to be moved and directed; without stopping every moment, to extenuate the severity, or limit the application of my strictures: but I have, in more than one place, admitted, incidentally, that there is a large proportion of that party, who, though highly illiberal and erroneous in their sentiments, and blamable for countenancing the dangerous length to which the tory faction have pushed their present efforts, are yet fundamentally honest and patriotic in their views. With this impression it will be supposed that I do not wish them to be proscribed as enemies, if the republican party should maintain its ground, and establish its principles permanently in the country, as I believe with the fullest assurance it will do. I have touched slightly upon the subject of conciliation. I see the haughty and malignant sneer with which the leaders of the party receive a suggestion of this kind; but I am not talking to them, nor do I look for any accommodation with them. They know that they have gone too far to turn back. They cannot with any show of consistency, or any hope of obtaining credit, ever profess to be reconciled to a republican administration. They must have the lead, or they will remain in opposition. But, it is not so with the bulk of the federalists. They are sensible, as we are, that the present divided state of the country is an unsafe and unnatural one. They know that our political conflicts have been carried to too great a length; and that foreign war is not the only danger that threatens us. If they can recover the direction of affairs by means of the present ferment, we expect they will do it; but if they fail—if they find that the mass of the American people continue, under all circumstances, attached to the principles of government which have been sanctioned by so many successive declarations of the public sentiment, what is to be their situation?

Are they still to abet the rage of those desperadoes who have abjured every interest but that of Great Britain, and make war upon their government until it is forced to make war upon them? are they, on the other hand to stand aloof like strangers, and to take no concern in public affairs until another opportunity invites them to strike again for the whole? or are they to keep up a languid and fruitless opposition, and hang like a dead weight, upon the government of their country, because they have once borne the name of federalists? I hope that none of these consequences will follow. I trust that they will have more sense, and the republican rulers more magnanimity, than to permit a third, fourth, or even a tenth part, of the community to remain in a state of habitual estrangement from the general interests of the country. I speak not of Pickering, of Gore, of Jay, and such like men; or of the directors of their party in our state, but I mean to admit that, among the sober minded federalists, there are men worthy of having a share in the administration of government. I repugn and detest, as I do tyranny of every kind, the doctrine of universal proscription for difference of opinion, and I believe that those who possess the power of effecting their intentions,

would equally disclaim it. I believe that it may be practicable to reduce our political contentions to that moderate scale at which they would cease to be hurtful. But when and in what way can this be attempted?

As soon as the real Americans of the federal party will break their alliance with the Tories attached to it; as soon as they learn to repulse every attempt of those aliens in spirit to influence the councils of this country; as soon as they cease to give countenance to pretensions ruinous to our commerce and our independence; and can resolve to forego advantages arising out of the unprovoked hostility of foreign powers: As soon as they disclaim the vile acts of personal detraction practised by their partisans, and have the magnanimity to try their principles against ours by fair discussion, and by temperate appeals to the people, when under no immediate pressure capable of biasing their judgments. Then, if they can satisfy you that a public debt is a public blessing; that the wisdom and virtue of the country reside exclusively in its aristocracy, (for such an order, believe me, there is wherever there is wealth;) that the more tax-gatherers there are, the less taxes you pay; or, what will amount to the same thing, that the more money you pay the more you have still in your pockets; in short, if they can convince the people of this country that their method of administering the general government is preferable to that of the republicans, in God's name let us have their system again, all but the gag-law; for if we should happen to like federal measures as little as before, it would be some relief to complain, although not to much purpose. But I mean seriously to say, that if the British influence was destroyed in this country, there would be little danger, now, from the propensity of a part of our citizens to arbitrary systems of government. There would be occasional vibrations of sentiment among the people, and consequent changes of their public functionaries. There would still be an opposition of opinions; contention between the ins' and the out'—and no friend to liberty would wish it to be otherwise. But let us be free from foreign influence, and our leading principles of government are unalterably established.

In what degree even the moderate or well meaning federalists will relish this idea of ceasing their opposition to the government, when the present struggle is over, and regaining that share of public confidence to which they are individually entitled, is a matter that must rest with themselves. It is enough for me that in undertaking to advise my fellow citizens on this critical and momentous occasion, I disclose the whole extent of my views, and shew them a practicable and reasonable method of putting a stop to conflicts which cannot continue in their present violence without producing something fatal to the independence of this country. To be clear, as to the particular result to be apprehended, I will state explicitly that what I fear is the direct and open interference of a foreign nation in our civil contentions. The war of words has been carried to its height. It is far from being my intention to threaten war of another kind. I would sacrifice all my earthly hopes to avert such a calamity; but no man can shut his eyes to the possible consequences of so bold and so bitter an opposition as that which now prevails against the government of this country. We threaten no violence; the laws are our weapons; but if insurrections are raised they must be subdued by adequate means, and by direct coercion, if necessary. I should not touch upon such a subject as this were it not for the essential purpose of pointing out the way in which danger is most likely to approach us. It is in the shape of a foreign ARMED INTERPOSITION between the two parties, or between the two geographical divisions of united America. Suppose that the British faction at Boston should push matters a little further than they have yet done: it will not be denied that they have talked openly of a dissolution of the union; and those who suppose that their interest in the public funds is a sure pledge against their realising this threat, know little of the resources of mother Britain, who would at a word, compensate their losses, and plunder the Southern states to repay herself. Suppose then, that in pursuit of that object, or by any other means, this same faction should get fairly to loggerheads with our general government; do you think the British would remain unconcerned spectators of the contest? no, fellow citizens; the smallest glimmer

of historical knowledge will instruct you that they are noted for interfering in the affairs of other nations. They have very convenient means of co-operation with their friends in New England, and they must be governed by other councils than they at present are, if, on such an occasion, they did not assist the opposition to the American government. But, supposing, on the contrary, that they should step in on the side of the government; the matter would not, in my opinion, be much mended. May God defend this country against the protection of the British nation. I speak it not in enmity to them, but in fervent concern for the cause of freedom, and the prosperity of the only land in which freedom exists. May we never see their forces in our towns or ports, on any terms, but least of all as mediators or protectors. Their friendship at a distance I would not be for rejecting, when they are disposed to shew it by actions; but their interference in our domestic affairs I deprecate as the worst of evils.

I would say the same of the French if I could see the least sign or probability of such an interference on their part. They have attempted, it is true, to dictate to the nation. They have insulted, they have injured, and they continue to injure us; I do not deny it. They would endeavour to corrupt us; to organize parties in our country, and to influence our councils, if they had the same motives for it with the English. But this is not at present the case. They are occupied by other objects; and neither their corruptions nor their hostility are to us matters of such reasonable apprehension as those of the British nation, which is scarcely more engaged in its own affairs than in the affairs of this country. The cry of French influence—of attachment and subservience to France; is a mere pretence—a stale retort, or *quid pro quo*, bottomed on nothing but that just resentment against the British nation which we do not disguise, and which will be as apparent against the French when their injuries effect the country in an equal degree. If this is not yet the case, as it assuredly is not, we do not attribute it to the friendship or to the superior justice or moderation of that power. We view her with the same jealousy as we do Great-Britain. The only difference is that the latter has more immediate means and motives to injure us in our commercial pursuits, and to batter at our national independence; and our resistance is naturally directed against the greatest pressure.

Our proper course fellow citizens is plain and simple. It is to steer clear of the broils of those irreconcilable enemies; to avail ourselves of the benefits of commerce when it may be pursued with safety, and to put ourselves in a condition to do without it when it presents no advantages. The embargo has given rise to some trial of our faculties in this respect. It has opened views, and prompted undertakings, which must have a most beneficial effect. It has of itself produced an effect of the utmost importance to our real independence, in teaching us what nations as well as individuals ought to learn; namely, that *what depends on the will of others, and not on our own; ought never to be our ONLY resource*. There is no danger however of our being obliged to abandon foreign commerce. We have been often threatened with the loss of our great commercial advantages. Those threats are in part realized; and we shall, perhaps, never recover those advantages in their full extent. We must be contented with what we can retain, and avail ourselves of favorable conjunctures for improving it. The present state of things cannot continue. The two bullies of Europe will not long persist in measures of one and the same tendency, although, by a strange effect of determined opposition, they now seem to join in opposing neutral commerce. It is our part to wait for events, without binding ourselves to the fortune of either; and, if we observe this policy, their protracted strife will not fail to produce a change to our advantage. But, in the mean time, fellow citizens let us be constant, consistent, and just, in our domestic concerns. You have an administration of your free choice. Its principles of government have been repeatedly sanctioned & approved. Its impartiality, good faith, and moderation, in respect to our foreign concerns, have been demonstrated. Its prudence and ability are not to be questioned if those qualities are to be found in our country; and its attachment to those principles of government which have at all times been professed by the advocates of liberty,

and friends of the human race, are still more indisputable. Change it for one of a different cast, and you will be involved in European contentions; and see your country a prey to foreign influence, to aristocratical cabals, to general depravity and corruption, and finally, to some despotic usurper. Adhere to it, and it will lead you to safety and happiness.

(To be continued.)

For the Maryland Republican.

TO THE PEOPLE OF MARYLAND.

Fellow Citizens,

WE have the happiness to live under a form of government founded upon the sacred and unquestionable truth, that all power originates from the people; that government is established for their benefit, and should ever be administered to protect their rights and promote their happiness. This being the only legitimate object in the formation of society and establishment of civil power, it follows as a necessary consequence, that whenever the representatives of the people violate their views, or defeat these purposes—whenever, in the exercise of the powers delegated to them, they manifest partialities or preferences for any portion of the community for which they act, they are guilty of a breach of the solemn trust with which they were invested, and no longer deserve the public confidence. Let us then apply this acknowledged principle, as plain as it is just, to the late alarming attempt to give us an established religion in Maryland.

Religion, or the exercise of that duty which we owe to our Creator, being entirely matter of conscience, as guided by holy writ, or man's conception of it, cannot with propriety, be subject to the control of any human power, or the influence of any civil jurisdiction. If we believe the voice of divine inspiration, it requires no aid from human hands to give it that universal prevalence and authority it is certain eventually to attain. In England, the Protestant Episcopal Church is established by law—in Maryland, a bill was introduced, and with some little alteration, passed the House of Delegates at the last session, to accomplish the same object; it was, however, wisely and properly defeated by the votes of our republican Senate, but for whose opposition, it would this day have been the law of the state. It was, indeed, opposed in the House of Delegates, by which opposition alone, the seventh section of the bill was stricken out, and was then hurried thro' the federalists having a majority in that branch of the legislature, the opposition of the republicans was wholly unavailing.—Let us now consider what were the provisions of that bill:—In the first place, the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church (at present self-created) were incorporated by this federal bantering, and made a body politic forever thereafter, and endowed with power and capacity to acquire, possess and enjoy property, real and personal, to an unlimited and indefinite amount. Here then, is at once, an exclusive privilege, a manifest preference established in favor of the Protestant Episcopal Church. Why do I say so? Because, in every other instance of an incorporation of a religious sect, the amount of property which they were rendered capable of holding, has been defined and limited, and generally, to a very inconsiderable amount; by which means society has been protected from the undue influence of monopoly, and the baneful consequences of that bigotry and enthusiasm which has been so often the scourge of men and nations. What, my fellow-citizens, must then, be your astonishment, when you find a bill passed, by federal means, in the House of Delegates of Maryland at their last session, by which your best civil and religious privileges have been hazarded, and your constitution violated? A bill authorising the Protestant Convention to hold property to any amount—Nay, if the means could be obtained, they might monopolize the whole state! what then would be our situation? Can we for a moment believe otherwise, than that we should be compelled to become, as many of their pastors are, religious in form, not in substance; and whether pleased or displeased, we should be compelled to pay a portion of our hard labour to men, many of whom protest against nothing bad, as is clearly proved by the department of some while not actually in the pulpit?—People of Maryland, of all religious and political opinions, it is time to look around you. Have the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Quakers, or any other religious society, the like privilege as was held out in this bill to the Protestants? I answer, no. It is a power vested in the self-select alone—the chosen few. Are we prepared to say the Protestant Episcopal Church shall be established as the religious guide for Maryland? Are we prepared to yield and subject our religious opinions and belief to the controul of the Legislature? And are we to ask our law-makers in what manner we shall worship our God? For rely upon it, if ever, fellow-citizens, you suffer an established church to gain a footing in this country, you will inevitably be reduced to this deplorable situation.

In 1792—chapter 55, certain corporate powers are given to the Roman Catholic clergymen; but they are restricted to the possession of property, to which they had acquired a title anterior to the 14th of August 1776. No new or subsequent

PRINTING,

OF EVERY DESCRIPTION,
EXECUTED IN THE NEATEST MANNER,
AT THE OFFICE OF THE
MARYLAND REPUBLICAN.