

Maryland commissioners were Colonel Benjamin Tasker, Jr., of the Upper House, a son of Benjamin Tasker, President of the Council, and Major Abraham Barnes of St. Mary's County, a prominent member of the Lower House, who usually voted with the Proprietary party. The proceedings of this conference, now among the State Papers in the Maryland Historical Society, is perhaps the only entirely complete record of the deliberations of this body which has been preserved. Called to consider measures to preserve for the English colonies the friendship of the Iroquois tribes, under the guiding hand of Benjamin Franklin it went afield, and a far-reaching plan was formulated for a continuing co-operation between the colonies, and for future colonial conferences. That this plan failed of formal adoption was of comparatively little importance, for the seeds of common inter-colonial action had been sown, from which later were to emerge the Continental Congress and the union of the colonies.

A bill for "the Security of his Majesty's Dominions, and to prevent the growth of Popery" was introduced and passed in the Lower House by a vote of 32 to 19, the Proprietary party apparently voting solidly against it. This was a scheme to make the Catholics pay the costs of the war. The Upper House promptly rejected the bill. The Lower House then demanded that it be printed in full in the Votes and Proceedings of this body. It is needless to remark that this was in order to give, to what they believed was a popular measure, as wide publicity as possible. The bill provided "for better securing the safety of his Majesty's Dominions" and preventing the perversion of his Protestant subjects by Popish Priests and the resulting danger of the Romanists joining with the French, that a commission of seven members, who were named in the Bill, be appointed to take over and sell all manors or other lands belonging to any Popish priest or Jesuit, or held in trust for them, and apply the proceeds towards securing his Majesty's dominions here against the encroachments of the French. The commissioners named in the bill included one member of the Upper House and six members of the Lower House, who, it is needless to say, were the active leaders of the anti-Catholic element in the Assembly. Before this bill was drawn up the Committee on Grievances and Courts of Justice of the Lower House had brought in a report on certain Catholic activities in St. Mary's County, which had been unanimously adopted. This report declared that a mob of Roman Catholics in St. Mary's County had prevented by violent means the recruiting of men there for the Virginia regiment for service on the Ohio, "had drank the pretender's health" and "Huzzaed for the Tartan Plad and white Cockade." A message from the Governor to the Lower House a few days later said he had taken steps to bring the leaders of the mob guilty of this outrage to justice; and it is to be noted that soon