

The statement previously sent was taken from the certificates of Assistant Marshals, which were in many instances incorrect.

I have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully,
your obedient servant,

JOS. C. G. KENNEDY,
Sup't. of Census.

HON. J. G. CHAPMAN, Pres. Con., Annapolis.

Which was read and referred to the committee on representation.

The President also laid before the Convention a report from the clerk of Worcester county court, relative to fees paid the Deputy Attorney General of said county, in obedience to the order of the Convention;

Which was read and referred to the committee appointed on the Attorney General and his Deputies.

On motion of Mr. Biser, the Convention proceeded to the orders of the day.

THE BILL OF RIGHTS.

The Convention resumed the consideration of the order of the day, being the report submitted by Mr. DORSEY on the 11th ult., as chairman of the committee on the declaration of rights.

RELIGIOUS TESTS.

The article under discussion yesterday, was the thirty-third article in the words following:

Art. 33. That as it is the duty of every man to worship God in such manner as he thinks most acceptable to him, all persons are equally entitled to protection in their religious liberty; wherefore, no person ought by any law to be molested in his person or estate, on account of his religious persuasion or profession, or for his religious practice, unless under color of religion, any man shall disturb the good order, peace, or safety of the State, or shall infringe the laws of morality, or injure others in their natural, civil or religious rights; nor ought any person to be compelled to frequent or maintain or contribute, unless on contract to maintain any place of worship or any ministry.

And the pending question was on the motion of Mr. RIDGELY, to amend said article by inserting after the word "estate," in the fourth line, the following:

"Or suffer any civil or political incapacity."

Mr. RIDGELY said, the amendment under consideration he had endeavored to explain on yesterday at the time of adjournment; he would now ask the indulgence of the house, to state more fully its purpose. It was intended for a two-fold object. The article is designed to secure to every citizen the rights of conscience, the privilege unrestrained of religious worship, and to protect him in person and estate from molestation, in the exercise of those rights; here the amendment comes in, and enlarges the language of the article, by providing also, that he shall "suffer no civil or political incapacity" on account of his religious opinion; the right to form and enjoy which, it is intended to secure to him. He had stated on yesterday, that his purpose was by this amendment, to relieve a large and highly

respectable class of people who did not believe in a state of future rewards and punishments, from a civil disability, now resting upon them, and also to dispense with all tests for office, which imposed belief in future rewards and punishments as a qualification for such office. The latter purpose it was said was obviated by the 35th article. He thought not, but if he was mistaken in opinion, he was willing to modify his amendment to that extent, although, he could see no propriety for a distinct article on that subject, when the words "civil or political incapacity" would cover the entire ground. It had been argued yesterday by the gentleman from Anne Arundel, (Mr. Donaldson,) that there was no necessity for the first branch of the amendment, because, as the law now stood, any person was qualified as a witness, who believed in a Supreme Being, and moral accountability to that Being under pain of punishment in this, or a future world. Such he begged to say, was not the law of Maryland, however it may be elsewhere. In the courts of Maryland, the question usually propounded to a witness was, Do you believe in a future state of rewards and punishments? If the witness answered in the negative, he was rejected as incompetent on account of his religious belief. Such had been the practice in Baltimore county, in Frederick and in Washington, and as he understood from the honorable gentleman from Kent, (Mr. Chambers,) in his district. He was not prepared to say, whether this was a proper exposition of the common law, from which the principle was derived; he spoke of it only as it existed in Maryland, as a serious, and oppressive civil, disability operating upon many conscientious and worthy citizens. He said he was aware that a much more enlightened application of the common law rule now prevailed in England, and in many of the States; that the rule had been much relaxed elsewhere; and the modern doctrine out of Maryland now was, that belief in a Supreme Being, and the certainty of punishment by that Being for human acts in this world or in the world to come, was all that was required, but he repeated that the old English doctrine of belief in rewards and punishments in a future world, still prevailed in some of the courts of the State. It was to relieve from this civil disability citizens who did not entertain such religious belief, that the amendment was designed. He would have employed the language, which was used in the New York Constitution, "that a man's religious opinions should not render him incompetent as a witness in any court of law or equity;" but he had doubts, whether incompetency as a witness was the only civil disability, which might arise on account of religious opinions, under the rule of law which obtained in some of the county courts. He did not know whether the question had ever been raised, or decided, whether disbelief in a state of future rewards and punishments, would disqualify a juror, but he could well imagine that the rule would equally apply to a juror, as to a witness; and would, under the existing exposition of the law, be a good ground of challenge. He had, therefore, used comprehensive language, so as to