

An Act to provide a fund for the relief of the widows and children of the clergy of the protestant episcopal church in this state.

**W**HEREAS it hath been represented to this general assembly <sup>Preamble</sup> by the reverend William Smith, doctor in divinity, the reverend William West, John Andrews, and Thomas John Clagett, that they are a committee appointed by and in behalf of the clergy of the protestant episcopal church in this state, (formerly denominated the church of England,) to solicit an act of incorporation to enable the clergy of the said church to raise and manage a fund for providing small annuities for the distressed widows of the said clergy, and for the education of their children; and this general assembly are earnestly desirous to promote every pious and charitable design for the relief and assistance of the widows and fatherless, and especially those of the respectable and useful body of clergy of all denominations, who are often obliged through the uncertainty and scantiness of their support in many places, to leave their families in very necessitous circumstances: Therefore,

II. Be it enacted, by the General Assembly of Maryland, That the said protestant episcopal clergy, namely, William Smith, John Gordon, John M'Pherson, William Thomson, Samuel Keene, William West, Walter Magowan, John Andrews, Thomas John Clagett, George Goldie, Edward Gantt, Francis Lauder, Joseph Messenger, John Bowie, Walter Harrison, Thomas Gates, James Wilmer, Hamilton Bell, Francis Walker, John Stewart, Samuel Tingly, Leonard Cutting, Ralph Higinbotham, Mason Weems, and Edward Gantt, junior, and such other clergymen in the orders and communion of the said church as may hereafter become residents of this state, and shall be contributors to the said funds of the corporation herein erected, and as may be admitted into the said corporation by a majority of the members thereof for the time being, shall be, and they and their successors are hereby declared to be, one community, corporation, and body politic, for ever, by the name of "The Corporation for the relief of the widows and children of the clergy of the protestant episcopal church in Maryland;" and by the same name they and their successors shall and may have perpetual succession, and shall and may, at all times hereafter, be persons able and capable in law to purchase, take, have and enjoy, to them and their successors in fee, or for any less estate or estates, any lands, tenements, rents, annuities, pensions, and other hereditaments, within this state, by the gift, bargain, sale or devise, of any person or persons, bodies politic and corporate, capable to make the same; and such lands, tenements, rents, annuities, pensions, and other hereditaments, or any less estates, rights or interests, of or in the same, at their pleasure to alien, sell, transfer or lease, in such manner as they may judge most conducive for furthering the pious designs of this charitable incorporation, and according to the nature of such estate as they may have in the same; and also that they, and their successors, may take and receive any sum or sums of money, and any kind, manner or portion, of goods and chattels, that may or shall be given, sold or bequeathed, unto them, by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, capable to make a gift, sale, or bequest thereof, and to employ the same, either in the immediate payment of annuities to the widows aforesaid, and other declared purposes of this incorporation, or in providing a fund or capital sufficient to produce an yearly interest, revenue or income, for answering the good purposes of the same; provided, that the clear yearly value of the said capital, fund, stock, and other hereditaments and real estate of the said corporation, do not exceed fifteen thousand