

of this state, to be paid at the time of sale." Strike out the word "common," in the 8th line of the 7th page.

The bill, entitled, A supplement to the act, entitled, An act to establish pilots, and to regulate their fees, was read the second time by especial order and will not pass, and, with the above bill, sent to the house of delegates by John Smith, Esquire.

Mr. Dorley, from the house of delegates, delivers to the president a bill, entitled, An act to cede to congress a district of ten miles square, for the seat of the government of the United States, endorsed, "By the house of delegates, December 23, 1788: Read the first and second time by especial order and will pass.

"By order, W. HARWOOD, clk."

Which was read the first and second time by especial order and will pass.

Also the resolution, respecting the publishing the incorporating bill, endorsed, "By the house of delegates, December 22, 1788: Read and assented to.

"By order, W. HARWOOD, clk."

And also the following message:

By THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, DECEMBER 23, 1788.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOURS,

ANXIOUS to put an end to the present session, we propose to continue sitting this day until the business is finished, which we expect may be by four o'clock.

By order, W. HARWOOD, clk.

Which was read.

A bill, entitled, An act to incorporate certain persons in every christian church or congregation throughout this state.

WHEREAS it is reasonable and proper, that all denominations of christians within this state, whose members conduct themselves in a peaceable and orderly manner, should receive and enjoy equal rights and privileges, without partiality, preference or distinction, in all things concerning the temporalities and government of their respective churches, congregations and societies: And whereas also it is necessary to their welfare, that they should be empowered to hold and acquire certain portions of property in a corporate or congregational capacity, and enter into various engagements of a civil or temporal nature, which can only be done by the assistance of the general assembly; which assistance may nevertheless be rightfully granted without disturbing private opinions, or affecting the rights of judgment in matters of religion, or imposing an involuntary burden on any person whatsoever: And whereas it is most convenient to make provision for their respective situations by a general law, which shall reach their several exigencies in affairs of a temporal or civil nature, as far as a difference of circumstances will admit, the general assembly having therefore taken the premises into serious consideration, and conceiving themselves indispensably bound to secure and preserve the same equality of rights, privileges and advantages, to all quiet and inoffensive christian societies in this state, without any exception, whereby religion may be encouraged and diffused, and peace, order, and universal tranquillity, prevail, have agreed to enact,

And be it enacted, by the general assembly of Maryland, That in every christian church, society or congregation, of whatsoever sect, order or denomination, now known, or which shall at any time hereafter be known and acknowledged in this state, and protected in the free and full exercise of their religion, by the constitution and laws of the same, there shall be and remain sufficient power and authority in all the male persons above twenty-one years of age, belonging to any such church, society or congregation, to elect, at their discretion, certain sober and discreet persons, not less than five, nor more than thirteen; which persons so elected, shall be and are hereby constituted a body politic or corporate, upon being registered as herein after directed, to act as trustees in the name and behalf of the particular church, society or congregation, for which they are respectively chosen; and to manage the estate, property, interest and inheritance, of the same, in the most upright and careful manner, and shall moreover have perpetual succession in law, fact and name, as herein after prescribed, and shall, by their name of incorporation, have full power and lawful authority to sue and to be sued, to implead and to be impleaded, to answer and to be answered unto, in any court or courts of law or equity within this state, before any judge or judges, justice or justices, in all manner of suits and pleas whatever, and of what nature or kind soever such suits, pleas or actions, may be, in as full and effectual manner as any other person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, may or can do.

And be it enacted, That every such body politic or corporate shall be chosen, and the succession kept up, at such times and places as are ordinarily used for public meetings of the said church, society or congregation, and by such persons as are allowed to have a voice in the management and direction of congregational or temporal concerns, according to the known custom and usage of their respective denominations; or the said body politic or corporate shall be chosen, and the succession kept up, according to the rules, regulations and practice, that may have been heretofore adopted and used; or that shall be at the first time of electing adopted and agreed upon by any particular church, society or congregation, for ordering, directing or managing, their congregational or temporal concerns; provided always, that every trustee or member of any corporation aforesaid, shall be of the same religious sect or denomination with the church, society or congregation, by which he is chosen to this trust; and provided also, that the minister, or senior minister, where there are more than one settled in any church, society or congregation, shall always, in virtue of his ministry, be a member of the body politic or corporate belonging to the same, exclusive of the number heretofore prescribed.

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