

ORDERED, That Mr. J. Hall, Mr. Beall, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Lloyd, do present the Address to his Excellency.
His Excellency communicates to Mr. Speaker the following Message, inclosing the following Propositions.

GENTLEMEN of the LOWER HOUSE of ASSEMBLY.

SEVERAL Ministers of the established Church, having presented an Address to me, I take the Liberty (by Advice of the Lord Proprietary's Council) of communicating it to you, and hope you will think the Propositions this Address contains, deserve your serious Attention.

ROBERT EDEN.

December 8, 1773.

To his EXCELLENCY ROBERT EDEN, Esquire, Governour and Commander in Chief in and over the Province of Maryland.

S I R,

WE the underwritten Clergymen of the established Church in this Province, beg Leave to approach your Excellency with our grateful Acknowledgments for your constant Attention to, and Concern for the Interests of our Church: An Attention and Concern which could never be more seasonable than at the present Juncture. Our unhappy Situation is not unknown to your Excellency, nor, we believe, unlamented. Most cordially do we wish it were as much in our Power, as it is in our Inclination, to restore the public Peace and Tranquillity. Impressed with this Sentiment, and grieved to find our Usefulness to the Community so unhappily interrupted by the unreasonable Prejudices which have been excited against our Order and ourselves, we are not unwilling, with your Approbation, to relinquish some of our undoubted Rights. We therefore wish to submit to your Excellency's Consideration the following Propositions; the best we have been able to form; the Expediency or Inexpediency whereof we beg Leave to refer to your better Judgment.

If there be any well-founded Objection against the present Establishment, we think it is, that, in some few Instances, it gives too large Salaries. To remove this, it is proposed, that whenever the solvent taxable Persons in a Parish do, or shall exceed Twenty-two Hundred, the Excess shall be appropriated still to the Service of the Church, by being sunk into a Fund, to be lodged on stipulated Conditions with the Treasurer on each Shore, for the Purpose of further disseminating religious Instruction; that is to say, to be applied, when sufficient for the Purpose, to the Maintenance of a Reader, Lecturer, or Curate to be appointed by the Ordinary; and, in Time to the Erection of new Parishes. This, we are persuaded would be to pursue the Plan and Design of the first Framers of our Act of religious Establishment; and, we trust, remove all just Cause of Complaint. Whatever may be your Sentiments of this Proposition, we assure ourselves, you will do us the Justice to believe, that herein we have not been actuated by any merely selfish Motives, but by the more becoming one of an honest Zeal for the Interests of our holy Religion.

Or, if such a Regulation cannot be obtained, perhaps a Proposition to the following Purpose may. To obviate the Objection of a Disparity of Payment in the same Parish, let the Number of Tobacco and Non-Tobacco makers be ascertained; let the Amount of the Tobacco and Money Payments be also ascertained as under the late Inspection Law, and the Tobacco valued or rated, yearly, by the County Courts in August, at a medium Price, and the whole equally and fairly divided among the taxable Persons of the Parish. This to commence and terminate with the present Inspection Law.

Should this also fail, permit us, Sir, solicitous as we are for the Peace and Welfare of the Province, to trespass so far on your Patience, as to offer a Third Proposition. Let each taxable Person in a Parish have the Option of paying in the Month of August, either the Tobacco due by Law to his Incumbent, or Five Shillings Common Currency; for and continuing the same Term of Years as the former Proposition was made upon.

We hope, Sir; that the Propositions which we have here made, will appear to your Excellency and the other Branches of the Legislature not unreasonable; not that we are so sanguine as to flatter ourselves that they are without Exception. If, from any, or all of them, or any other, not shaking the Foundation of our present Establishment, a Plan can be devised acceptable to the People and not injurious to our Church, we shall be happy. If not, faithfully endeavouring to discharge our Duty, our Resolution is to abide, without Deviation, by the Act of 1701-2; the Validity whereof, we hope will soon be established by a solemn legal Decision.

We are Sir,

Your dutiful humble Servants,

THO. THORNTON,
H. ADDISON,
J. GORDON,
HUGH NEILL,
ROB. READ,
SAMUEL KEENE,
THOMAS JOHN CLAGGETT,
FRANCIS LAUDER,

JONATHAN BOUCHER,
DAVID LOVE,
JOHN ANDREWS,
WILLIAM EDMISTON,
JOHN MONTGOMERY,
WALTER MAGOWAN,
JACOB HENDERSON HINDMAN.