

ing with great concern the deplorable condition to which this once happy country would be reduced unless some regular, adequate mode of civil policy should be speedily adopted, and in compliance with the recommendation of the general Congress, ordain and declare a form of government of Virginia;

And whereas a convention held on the first Monday in October, in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine, did propose to the people of this commonwealth an amended constitution or form of government, which was ratified by them;

And whereas the general assembly of Virginia, by an act passed on the fourth of March, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty, did provide for the election, by the people, of delegates to meet in general convention, to consider, discuss, and propose a new constitution, or alterations and amendments to the existing constitution of this commonwealth; and by an act passed on the thirteenth of March, in the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, did further provide for submitting the same to the people for ratification or rejection; and the same having been submitted accordingly, was ratified by them;

And whereas the general assembly of Virginia, by an act passed on the twenty-first day of December, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, did provide for the election, by the people, of delegates to meet in general convention to consider, discuss, and adopt alterations and amendments to the existing constitution of this commonwealth, the delegates assembled did, therefore, having maturely considered the premises, adopt a revised and amended constitution as the form of government of Virginia;

And whereas the Congress of the United States did, by an act passed on the second day of March, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, and entitled "An act to provide for the more efficient government of the rebel States," and by acts supplementary thereto, passed on the twenty-third day of March and the nineteenth day of July, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, provide for the election by the people of Virginia, qualified to vote under the provisions of said acts, of delegates to meet in convention, to frame a constitution or form of government for Virginia, in conformity with said acts, and by the same acts did further provide for the submitting of such constitution to the qualified voters for ratification or rejection:

*We, therefore, the delegates of the good people of Virginia, elected and in convention assembled, in pursuance of said acts, invoking the favor and guidance of Almighty God, do propose to the people the following constitution and form of government for this commonwealth:*

## ARTICLE I.

### BILL OF RIGHTS.

*A declaration of rights made by the representatives of the good people of Virginia, assembled in full and free convention, which rights do pertain to them and their posterity, as the basis and foundation of government.*

SECTION 1. That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity, namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

SEC. 2. That this State shall ever remain a member of the United States of America, and that the people thereof are part of the American nation, and that all attempts, from whatever source or upon whatever pretext, to dissolve said Union or to sever said nation, are unauthorized and ought to be resisted with the whole power of the State.

SEC. 3. That the Constitution of the United States, and the laws of Congress passed in pursuance thereof, constitute the supreme law of the land, to which paramount allegiance and obedience are due from every citizen, anything in the constitution, ordinances, or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.