

calities, apparent absurdities veiling deep meanings, and simple truths mysticised by ingenious fictions. The science of special pleading, so excellent in substance, and which in its proper state, would become the simplest, as it is the best, mode of ascertaining truth in a litigated case, is rendered complex by the garb in which it is clothed, and by the introduction of complex terms unintelligible even to the intelligent part of the community. For these reasons, the science of special pleading often becomes in the hands of those of the profession of the law, who may be mean enough so to use it, the instrument of cunning, and sometimes of chicanery.

The fourth grievance complained of by the memorialists, is one that must be obvious to every member of this house: to wit, that even in the laws of Maryland, great confusion and embarrassment prevails, to the injury of the community. The various laws which, by the change of circumstances, are partly in force, and partly null; the great number of acts, repealed only in part by subsequent acts; the vast number of supplements to laws; supplements to supplements, and acts supplementary to supplements, with further supplements, until the chain lengthens beyond admeasurement, render it difficult even for the erudite lawyer, in all cases, to ascertain the law, and impossible for those who have not turned their attention to the study of jurisprudence. Your committee are of the opinion, that as the laws of every free country are presumed to be for the benefit of the people, so they should be rendered clear to their comprehension, in order that, when they offend, they may do so, with their eyes open, upon a book of knowledge not to be misunderstood.

Your committee think, that all the grievances stated in the memorial, are public grievances, and require public redress. In order to obtain this desirable object, they respectfully recommend the adoption of the accompanying resolutions:

Resolved, That Theodorick Bland, Chancellor of Maryland, John Buchanan, Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, and Roger B. Taney, Counsellor at Law, be, and they are hereby constituted a board, to be entitled a Board for the establishment of a Maryland Code of Law. And it shall be the duty of said board, to compile, out of the common and statute law of England, the judicial decisions of every state and nation, and the statute law of Maryland, a complete code of laws, to be entitled The Maryland Code. And in case of vacancy occasioned by the death, resignation, or refusal to serve, of all or either of the above named board, the governor and council shall immediately proceed to supply such vacancy.

Resolved, That the said board, as soon as organised, shall proceed to the execution of their duties, and when they shall have fulfilled them, they shall make their report to the legislature of Maryland, for their adoption or rejection.

Resolved, That when the said work shall have been finished, the legislature shall furnish such compensation to the said board, as, under all the circumstances of the case, they may be entitled to receive.

By order,

Wm. H. Emory, Clk.

Which was read.

Mr. Millard delivers the following report:

The committee to whom was referred the petition of William Merryman, of Baltimore county, praying for a divorce a vinculo matrimonii, have had the subject under consideration, and beg leave to report—