

MEMORIAL.

TO THE HONORABLE,

THE LEGISLATURE OF VIRGINIA:

Your petitioners, members of the Religious Society of Friends, (called Quakers,) desire respectfully to call your attention to that portion of the Governor's Message in which he recommends the repeal of the law, exempting certain Religious Denominations from military duty by payment of a tax.

In his remarks on the subject, the Governor, doubtless unintentionally, does great injustice to, at least, one of those sects, The Friends. He assumes that the payment of said tax is an acknowledgment on the part of those paying it, that some aid is due from them to the Government in the prosecution of this war: on the contrary, we have paid said tax under protest, it being one of the established principles of our Society from its rise to the present day, that a Christian has no right to take up the weapons of carnal warfare for any earthly consideration; yet we believe it our duty, as good citizens, "To be in subjection to the Powers that be," and as the exemption law both of the Confederate and State Governments omitted to make any provision for distraint where the tax was not paid, it seemed to present the subject in a manner very similar to that in which our Saviour directed the tribute money to be paid—"That we offend them not."

The Discipline of every Yearly Meeting of our Society prohibits its members from taking part in any way, in war; from mustering, or paying any fine imposed for not mustering, requiring its members, in all such cases, quietly to submit to any distraints for said fine, and prohibiting them from concealing their property, or in any way evading said laws.

We believe that the Constitution of Virginia does, in those clauses which secure to every man the right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, afford ground for exemption to the members of our Society, as it is well known that we worship God not only as "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father," but also as "The Prince of Peace." Therefore, a bill exempting those who worship him as the Prince of Peace, to wit: Friends and Dunkards, instead of