

proal destiny transcend the inconceivable Earth upon which he
treads. Surely it is for this, above all other blessings, Gentlemen,
that we should humble ourselves in thanksgiving before the An-
-gust Benefactor of the Nation.

In my last Annual Message, I
so fully expressed my views in regard to the legislation suggested by
the new Constitution, that a repetition of them herein would be superflu-
ous. I again respectfully invite your attention to the amendment of
the election laws - the revision of the criminal code, especially in
regard to the inequality of punishments - the Acts of Assembly rela-
-ting to pardons and the remission of fines, forfeitures and penalties -
the modification of the tax on civil commissions - the ascertain-
-ment of the number and respective salaries of the deputy clerks, or
other assistants, to be hereafter employed by the Clerks of Courts and
Registers of Wills; at least, so far as relates to the City of Baltimore; in
order that the spirit and intention of Article III, Section 40 of the
Constitution, which limits the compensation of Clerks of Courts and
Registers of Wills, severally, to the sum of twenty five hundred dollars per
annum, over and above office expenses and the pay of assistants,
may not be practically defeated, by the payment of exorbitant
salaries, or the employment of unnecessary deputies - and the leg-
-islative construction of Article X, Section 1, which fixes the sum of
three thousand dollars as the limit of the annual compensation
of public officers. Upon this last subject, it may be well to
remark that some have doubted as to whether or not a gross or a
net income of three thousand dollars is contemplated. I think
that there can be no question on this point. The Constitution must
intend simply to abolish exorbitant incomes; and it has accord-
-ingly established a maximum. There are offices in the State,
which would not only be valueless, but absolutely a burden to the
incumbents, if the opposite construction were admitted. The
necessary expenses, therefore, of each office should be allowed out of
the gross receipts; and the extent and character of those expenses should
be well defined by law.

It is generally believed that the offices of the Clerks of the Courts of
the City of Baltimore, yield large revenues from fees to the incum-
-bents, greatly beyond what would be required to pay their Constitution-
-al salary of twenty five hundred dollars each, after the deduction
of reasonable clerk hire and all other necessary expenses. One year
has now elapsed, since the election and qualification of the
present incumbents; so that any law which you may pass, for the
purpose of carrying into effect the fortieth section of Article III
of the Constitution, should be made retrospective; in order that, a