

*Fellow Citizens of the Senate,*

*and of the House of Delegates:*

Your being assembled after the first election that has been held since the adoption of the amendments to the Constitution, in regard to the Executive and Legislative Departments, affords me an appropriate occasion to congratulate you, and our fellow-citizens generally, that those amendments have been effected without violence or disturbance in any quarter; without interruption to any of the functions of Government, and in strict conformity with the requirements of the organic law itself. This result, whilst it illustrates beautifully and brightly, the forecast of the great and good men who devised our Form of Government, adds another to the many testimonies already indelibly written in the history of our country, that the American people are endued with the moderation, the virtue and intelligence, necessary to fit them for self-government. I am firmly persuaded that those changes were called for by the exigencies of the times, and by the wishes of a large majority of the people of Maryland; and I entertain no fear that their operation will prove to be other than beneficial in all future time. Our Form of Government now, in every respect, exemplifies and vindicates Republican principles. These are the prevailing principles of the age, and distinguish the institutions of our beloved country, from those of any other in the civilized world. Their influences and tendencies can never be dangerous, so long as they are fortified by the lights of education, and restrained by the solemn obligations of moral law. It is then, the imperative duty of those who shall be clothed, from time to time, with the direction of our public affairs, to use every effort to keep the public mind properly informed; to devise and perfect schemes, which shall place them within the reach of every, the humblest citizen, the invaluable means of education; to elevate, so far as it can be done, consistently with the letter and spirit of our laws, the tone of public morals; to encourage love of order by example, and the deliberate, cautious enactment of penal statutes; to preserve inviolate, individual rights, and the public faith; to defend with inexorable determination, the majesty of the laws; and to protect from the rude grasp of demagogues, the independence of those whose peculiar and delicate responsibility it is, to expound it. A democracy, encompassed by influences such as these, is the most secure and the happiest Government, that the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty have ever permitted the human intellect to frame.