

grounds to our minds, so slight, or at best so questionable, so vital an assault on the corporate powers of this company has been recommended. This company is associated and connected with an important link in the chain of our internal improvements; and on its own resources, without any assistance from the State, and without even appealing to the State, except for its protection, has with great and commendable energy accomplished a magnificent work, which truly is of material importance, and of which Maryland may well be proud as shewing the enterprise of her citizens, as well as affording an assurance from the success which has already crowned their efforts, that the works in which she has so liberally invested her capital and embarked her credit, will eventually yield her suitable return. More than three and a half millions of dollars, on faith of the State's sanctions, and in confidence that rash or hasty legislation would never interfere with the company's progress, or her credit, have been devoted by this company to this noble enterprise, and knowing what the State owes to her dignity, the company has at least a right to expect, that a very clear and flagrant case of wilful and inveterate violation of duty shall exist, to authorise the State's sternest proceedings against her, and a blow such as recommended by the report of the majority of the committee, to be levelled against her existence.

In no instance of any corporation, much less in the case of one of such eminent utility, and, emphatically, public character, should the State be induced to assume a hostile attitude, unless where the corporate wrong is not only gross, but wilful, and shewn to be the result of the deliberate design of the corporation itself, not by constructive implication with the acts of agents, but by direct corporate authorization and privity, unquestionably the act of the corporation.

Nothing like such authorization—nothing like such design, is proved against this company. In the instances of the individual complaints, no evidence appears of any complaint ever having been made by the individuals to the corporation, or of any obstinate perseverance in conscious wrong on the part of the company; but in this case the first knowledge of any irregular charge (if there be any) on the part of one or two *agents* is furnished to the corporation when it stands arraigned before the sovereignty of the State. Is it worthy of the State, upon such a foundation of imputed error or excess, to aim at the extinction of such a corporation?

We have reason to believe that already the credit of the company has suffered, even from the menace which the report already made, levels against her in the proposed resolution, and such must be the unkind effects of even the intimation of such legislative denunciation.

But if such a proceeding, thus instituted, be not decidedly discountenanced, how stands even the State herself, in the eyes of all States, and in the estimation of all classes with whom she is interested to maintain a dignified consistency and unshaken credit, which reposes on that sense of honor which is alike the guarantee of her pecuniary obligations, and the protection of all bodies emanating from her legislative will. Whatever capricious or wayward movements she per-