

R E P O R T .

The committee on Education to whom was referred the orders of the House: 1st, to enquire into the expediency of appropriating the fund now devoted to free schools, to the increase of the sinking fund, or to the payment of the interest on the public debt,—and 2nd to report all sums of money annually paid out of the Treasury to colleges, academies and free schools, distinguishing each particular fund, and the several institutions which share therein, and the several acts of assembly authorising such appropriations: and also to report their opinion as to the expediency of appropriating for a limited time all such funds or a part thereof to the increase of the sinking fund, or to the payment of the interest on the public debt; having carefully considered the subjects embraced by these orders respectfully report to the House: That in the opinion of the committee it would be inexpedient and unjust to divert the fund or any part of it, which is now devoted to the support or aid of free schools, even if it is within the power of the legislature, which question the committee think it is not now necessary to consider or discuss. The fund appropriated to free schools, which is now the subject of inquiry under the order of the House, arises from the bonus or tax on bank stocks, and is secured to the counties by the same tenure by which the banks hold their charters; and also from 34,069²/₁₀₀ dollars, deducting therefrom one thousand dollars to the education of the indigent blind, of the receipts of the Washington and Baltimore Rail Road, which was substituted by the act of 1839, chapter 33, for so much of the interest on the surplus revenue received from the General Government which had been pledged to the support of free schools and used for the payment of the interest on the public debt.

The committee also report, the sums annually paid to colleges and academies, and herewith submit a tabular statement, shewing the sums paid to each institution and the several Acts of Assembly authorising such appropriations.

It would not be in the power of the committee, to ascertain what amount is paid to each free school in the State, or the Acts of Assembly under which such appropriations have been made, as each county has a distinct system, and manages and applies their respective proportions of the free school fund, according to the discretion of their local and municipal authorities.