greater risks would be encountered. If a committee, or the legislature, were likely to fall into error, from ignorance of the prior law,how much more likely would they be to commit mistakes, when the whole existence of the prior law would depend upon their knowledge of it, or sufficient re-enactment of its terms when it was discovered?

He would take the case of another corporation, since the gentleman from Frederick had alluded to the mischief which supplements to a charter might affect. The laws relating to the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road Company, fill a considerable volume. They affect every portion of the economy and management of that road.

Now, at the last session of the legislature, a brief law of some dozen lines was passed, prescribing the time of the annual selection of the directors of this company. It was a supplement to the act of 1826, which incorporated the company. Who here can say, what parts of the old act this disturbed, so as to require a republication?

It might incidentally alter the whole relation of the company to the State—its largest stockholder—or it might, as was probable the case, be a measure of mere inconvenience only.

Yet this proposition would have entailed upon the projector of this law, a laborious and difficult analysis of the very numerous acts of Assembly, relating to that Company, in order that all portions connected with it in the old system, might be preserved; or else, by their omission, they would have been constructively repealed. And, if a safer course were pursued, and *the whole* of the law were re-enacted in one grand railroad law, the statute book would be over-loaded. So again, in reference to any other charter. If a bank had a privilege given to it, which was an extension of an old liberty, it would require for its safety that all its old chartered privileges should be re-enacted. He could conceive nothing more cumbrous. than such legislation. The laws of one session would be the same of almost all that had gone before, with the lucubrations of the year added.

In more serious matters the case would be worse. Take the testamentary law; it began in *th*e last century, and its supplements are very numerous. Many of its sections contain provisions, explicable to different classes of objects. The thread of connection is difficult to trace. Suppose that a new inconvenience were to occur if, as a member of the legislature, he was satisfied by his own experience, assisted by the judgment of abler counsel, that this inconvenience could be remedied, he would not have hesitated, under direction and advice, to introduce such an amendment. But if the proposition of the gentleman from Caroline, carries, who would amend such a law? The risk would be too great.

If all the provisions properly belonging to the amendment were not re-enacted, they would be considered as repealed. But to re-enact them might demand a patient analysis of sections,which very few men were capable of performing; and yet, if this were not done, the tenure of property—the most solemn formalities of the testamentary, system—the course of distribution—the probate of claims—the regulation of accounts—might all be disordered, and the most serious and irremediable embarrassments involve the whole system. The only escape would be the re-enactment of the whole law—a labor utterly useless in itself. Public convenience is readily gratified by digests, which derive their authority from the character of the compiler. The plan offered by himself ensured the certainty of the law. He understood that this re-enactment was only intended as a public convenience. But since the whole system would be codified—why, by re-enactment make a partial digest, when the re-enactment itself would be digested in the formation of a code? The code would be made in some three or four years—and the old system or legislation would serve till then. The inconvenience had been endured for nearly two centuries, and it could surely be borne with for four years longer at most.

The objection to the amendment of the gentleman from Washington, (Mr. Schley,) was that it did not provide for a codification of laws passed, after the code of existing laws was framed. It directed that there should be, every ten years, a publication and promulgation of the statute laws of the State, which were then in force. But if there was to be a code, he could not see why subsequent laws should not be codified by the Legislature which passed them.

No commissioners would understand their meaning better, and it was certainly running a useless circuit, for one Legislature to enact a law—another to appoint men to codify it—and a third to accept it as codified—when the first could have engrafted it, on the code itself, by legislating in that way, instead of pursuing the usual forms of a general act. The one plan was as convenient as the other, and more likely to lead to a correct understanding of the law, and to its symetrical growth.

In offering his proposition, he could frankly say, that he did it to achieve a union of conflicting opinions, and he had freely acccepted every suggestion which did not interfere with the main plan.

Mr. THOMAS said a few words in reply, in which he said he would not publish the whole statute, but merely the sections in it which were to be amended.

Mr. DENT said:

He would move an amendment to the substitute offered by the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Gwinn,) the same amendment, which upon his, (Mr. D.'s,) motion, had been engrafted upon the amendment of the gentleman from Washington. He, (Mr. D.,) preferred it should come in at the end of the substitute. There was some doubt which of these amendments would be adopted; he, therefore, wished to see his amendment incorporated upon both propositions. He was sure there would be no opposition.

Mr. GWINN accepted the amendment of Mr. DENT, as a modification of his own proposition.

The question then recurred on the modified