

The extension of our city boundaries—too long deferred—is now an absolute requirement, of national, State and city importance. The need is greater than it ever has been before. The suburbs of Baltimore on every side are thickly settled. Many flourishing towns and villages are closely adjacent to its limits. The benefits which these would derive from annexation are unquestionably great, including all the advantages of modern and symmetrical highways and bridges, gas and water supplies, fire department, police force, school system, etc. The State of Maryland owes it to its principal city, that its limits should be proportionate not only to its present needs, but also to its future promise, that its suburbs should be equal to those of some of the cities named, and to those of St. Louis, Cincinnati, San Francisco and New Orleans. Must we stand still, while all others are advancing, and hold a false position in national estimation? As it is, many younger rivals bid fair to distance us, as some already have done. At this rate of progress, Baltimore would make but an indifferent showing in the proposed National Centennial Census of 1875, recording and presenting in statistical tables the comparative growth of population and relative advancement of cities at the close of the first century of our national life, which will fix their position for years afterwards.

Any opposition to this movement, and almost every similar work of improvement, has been bitterly opposed—cannot be regarded as other than narrow, illiberal and altogether selfish—lacking in a becoming State pride and interest in a great city's advancement.

At present the surrounding portions of Baltimore county shares in many of the advantages enjoyed by the city, without any corresponding return. Our Public School system, costing the city annually sixteen dollars *per capita*, has in many instances educated the children of Baltimore county at a cost of four dollars per annum to the parent, and *free of cost* to the county. Our Fire Department, maintained by the city at an annual expense of a quarter of a million of dollars, has frequently rendered service in the same county. Our Police Force, requiring an annual expenditure by the city of over half a million dollars, are continually obliged to aid in preserving the peace in the county, sometimes at the additional cost of life. These benefits should not be reaped by those exempt from contributing to their maintenance. Again, our water supply, already in great demand in the county, if generally introduced, would have the effect of largely increasing the value of suburban property. The introduction of gas also, and the complete lighting of the suburban streets is also a most desirable feature of the proposed annexation.