

The opinion is therefore confidently entertained, that the entire present liabilities of the State on this account, may be discharged with less than \$350,000. The receipts into the Treasury during the current fiscal year from ordinary sources of revenue, will be fully adequate to the payment of this amount, as well as to the settlement of ordinary demands against the Treasury.

There may also be deducted from this estimate, the balance of more than \$50,000 remaining in the hands of Bounty and County Commissioners, and the City Register of Baltimore, which will be returned to the Treasury. The Commissioners of Queen Anne's county have already paid in \$5,290, a portion of the excess in their hands.

The attention of the General Assembly is respectfully called to the necessity for some legislation providing for a settlement with these officers.

The duties imposed upon this Office by the several Bounty Acts, have been exceedingly onerous and complicated. The many defects in the Acts referred to, together with the reckless action in several instances, of officers, in the authentication of claims, and in certifying to the identity of claimants, greatly increased the difficulties surrounding the settlement of these claims.

In the disbursement of so large an amount, in sums ranging from fifty to three hundred dollars, the hope was scarcely entertained that this Office would be entirely successful in defeating fraudulent claims. Many were presented, but by the exercise of care, and the use of other means in the possession of the Office, they were generally detected; so that the amount of fraudulent claims paid directly from this Department, does not exceed two thousand dollars. In the year 1864, under the provisions of the Acts of that year, a large sum was placed in the hands of the County Commissioners of the several counties, and the City Register of Baltimore, for the payment of bounty to white and free colored Volunteers. Payments of the bounty were made by them to colored Volunteers appearing on their rolls as free, who, as it was after-