

REPORT.

To the Honorable,

The House of Delegates of Maryland.

The undersigned, in compliance with your order of the 3d instant, respectfully report, that they have codified and printed all the Chancery Laws, the Testamentary Laws and the acts relating to crimes and punishments, comprising the most difficult part of our labors. The Chancery and Testamentary Laws we submitted at a former session, and the laws respecting crimes and punishments at this.

We have prepared the articles comprising the numerous acts relating to Abatement, Amendment, Appeals, Apprentices, Clerks, Commissioners, Constables, Courts, Descents, Registers, Justices of the Peace, Insolvents, and Sheriffs and Coroners, and have arranged the acts not contained in these articles so as to enable us to complete the codification of the General Laws in a few weeks.

We have prepared all the Local Laws, making a separate article for each county and the city of Baltimore. The manuscript of the local laws alone cover 1,654 closely written pages of foolscap.

As we have heretofore stated in our communications, it is impossible for the Legislature to examine a work so voluminous as ours at a regular session. The duty required of us, by the Constitution is to codify the acts of Assembly that are in force, and not to make any new law. We are mere codifiers, not legislators. Hence a careful examination is necessary to ascertain whether our work contains all the existing law, and nothing more.

When our code is adopted it supersedes all the statute law of the State, and it should, therefore, be compiled with care and diligence by us, and not adopted by the Legislature without strict scrutiny.

We respectfully suggest, as we have heretofore done, that the only practicable mode of examination is, by a committee in the recess. It would not be necessary for this committee to meet but a few times. The mode we suggest is, that a joint committee of both Houses be appointed, and we will furnish each member of the committee several copies of each article as soon as it is printed. This would afford an opportunity not only to each member of the committee to examine carefully for himself, but he could also furnish intelligent persons with the extra copies, and have, in that way, an examination by a large number of intelligent gentlemen, not members of the committee.