

existing, authorized the Governor, by general and special orders, to make such rules and regulations on the subject as might be constitutional and necessary, and which rules and regulations were to have the force and effect of law. This in fact imposed upon the Executive the duty of preparing an entirely new Militia system, and after vainly endeavoring, in the midst of the other duties of the Department, to command the time required for such an undertaking, I appointed a committee of five gentlemen, one from each of the Congressional Districts of the State, to assist me in that work. These gentlemen, Dr. Thos. K. Carroll, Hon. Edwin H. Webster, Col. Charles E. Phelps, Grayson Eichelberger, Esq., and Hon. Alexander Randall, met me in the city of Baltimore, and after a studious examination of our former laws, and the most approved systems of other States, and after several weeks of diligent labor, compiled a new, and I think a very effective Militia system, which I adopted, and which was published and promulgated by a general order of the Adjutant General on the 1st of November last.

These rules and regulations will be laid before you, and I hope will command your approval; to insure, however, their efficiency and success, a liberal appropriation will in the first instance be required, for though there is reason to believe that the privilege of pecuniary commutation for Military service, which, subject to certain conditions and limitations is allowed in these orders, and other provisions therein for the payment of fines and penalties, will, when the system is once fairly inaugurated, be nearly sufficient to sustain it, yet to put it in operation, and especially to provide the arms and equipments immediately required, an adequate appropriation will be indispensably necessary.

I would also suggest the passage of an Act of Assembly adopting the rules and orders referred to as the Militia Law of the State; for though, by the Act of the last session the force of law is expressly given to such orders, it may, nevertheless, prevent cavil or dispute hereafter, if the system so prepared should, if approved by your honorable body, receive its express ratification.

The Act of 1864 under which these orders were prepared expires by its own limitation, on the first of March, 1866, and will require another Act to continue it in force.

I would also beg you to bear in mind the necessity of an appropriation to pay the committee above named for the services, to which I am so much indebted, in the production of these rules and orders.