

As incidentally connected with the subject of the Southern Boundary of our State, I transmit a copy of a petition of the inhabitants of Tangier Island, asking for the annexation of that island to Maryland.

I trust that the condition of the Maryland Penitentiary will receive due consideration at your hands. The earnings of the Institution do not pay its expenses; and it will be necessary for you to aid it by a suitable appropriation. The Reports of the Directors and Officers, with accompanying statements, are herewith submitted.

In my communication to the General Assembly at its session in January, 1860, I suggested the propriety of punishing crimes of lesser grade by confinement in the Penitentiary for a shorter period than the minimum then allowed by law. The experiment has been made, and has not met my expectation. The large number of criminals of this class sentenced to the Penitentiary has imposed upon its finances a burthen which they cannot well endure.

When the convict is received at the Institution he is provided with a prison suit. When he is discharged he has to be supplied with another suit, and with two dollars in cash. Having been confined but a short time, he has not earned sufficient to pay the expenses of maintaining him; and the difference has to be defrayed from the funds of the Institution.

It seems to be necessary, therefore, to make some changes in the existing laws on this subject. While it is manifestly cruel and unjust to punish petty offences by long terms of imprisonment, it is certain that the present mode of punishment seriously interferes with the efficiency of the Penitentiary.

Perhaps the ends of justice might be fully attained by punishing this class of offenders by short terms of imprisonment in the jails or almshouses, at hard labor. In this way they might, at the least, under an efficient system, earn sufficient