

the distributions by the Federal Government, demands your attention.

The reports from the armorers at the State armories at Frederick and Easton, shown in connection with that of the Adjutant-General, are herewith submitted.

By the law, as it at present exists, the Adjutant-General is required to furnish arms, when applied for, and when available for that purpose, to all volunteer uniformed companies. At various times, resolutions have been passed by the General Assembly, directing the furnishing of stands of arms from the State armories to different academies, for the purpose of military drill, or to companies in various parts of the State, without requiring any bond for safekeeping or return. The result of this has been, the waste and squandering of the public arms, without any corresponding benefit to the public service; and the useless stripping of the armories left thus unprovided for cases of emergency.

We have seen in events lately transpiring upon our own borders, cause and warning for prompt legislation in this matter.

Notwithstanding the requirements of the first Section of the ninth Article of the Constitution, by which it is made the duty of the Legislature to pass laws for the enrolment of the militia; to provide for the districting the State into divisions, &c., and to pass laws for the effectual encouragement of volunteer corps, by some mode, which may induce the formation and continuance of at least one volunteer company in every county, and Division in the city of Baltimore; yet, with the exception of the act of 1853, chapter 343, relating exclusively to that city, no law has been passed by the General Assembly to this end. At the session of 1856, an effort was made to re-organize the military; a bill was introduced, but was not perfected, and failed to become a law by reason of the press of other, though certainly not more important, business.

It is of great importance to our security and the safety of our institutions, that the military arm should be in constant readiness for effective service; and though they are the most fortunate governments, which never need its assistance, we are admonished that the best preventive of disaster is the being forearmed against its coming. I respectfully invite your attention to this subject; and to the necessity for a thorough re-organization of the State militia; provision for the retaining always in the State arsenals a given number of arms of each kind, and a recall of all arms heretofore distributed to academies or companies, in which they are not now in actual use. I have already taken such measures as I thought the Executive empowered to adopt, and have collected and had returned to the care of the Adjutant-General here, a considerable number of arms belonging to the State.