

that a discretion of that kind existed would tend to secure a uniform value in the stock of the State, by avoiding that temporary inflation consequent upon large cash balances in the Treasury confined to such investments.

COLLECTION OF STATE TAXES.

A Statement in the Comptroller's Report for 1862, in reference to the mode of appointment and qualification of the Collector of State Taxes in the City of Baltimore, renders some provision on your part for the better security and the more prompt collection of such Taxes apparently necessary, and is suggestive of some alteration in the mode of collecting such Taxes throughout the State.

The authorities of that city, in common with those of the counties, are empowered to appoint the Collectors of State Tax, and are required to levy upon the property of the city, a sufficient amount to pay the expense of that collection. In providing for the exercise of this power, they have, as appears by the Report referred to, prescribed by a city ordinance an annual salary of two thousand dollars, as the compensation to the Collector, who for that amount, is required to collect the Taxes due as well to the city as the State. They have also by the same ordinance, prescribed the penalty of the bond which such Collector shall give and fixed the same at the sum of \$75,000, making it payable to *the city of Baltimore*. Both these Municipal provisions tend injuriously to affect the interests and impair the security of the State in that very material part of her resources derived from the Taxes payable in that city, and are, as it seems to me, obviously in conflict with the terms and spirit of the law of the State.

The only certain mode of securing a prompt performance of duty on the part of any Collector, is to make the amount of his compensation dependent upon the amount collected, and such was the manifest design of the 75th Section of the 81st Article of the Code, when "to secure a speedy collection of said Taxes," it provides that the city and county authorities shall annually levy "a commission not exceeding ten per centum, on the amount to be placed in the hands of such Collectors for collection."

But the advantage intended to be secured by this clause is entirely lost when the Collector's compensation is commuted to a fixed salary, and the consequence is not only a large arrearage of Taxes at the end of the year, and the necessity of making other provision for its collection, but the probability that a large part of it may be ultimately lost.