

system of internal improvement, has authorized the construction of the Philadelphia and Erie Rail Road; and, in so doing, has not only given her testimony to the importance of works of the kind to the State itself, but has shown her sense of their value as connected with her principal commercial city. Virginia, too, is rapidly urging forward her plan of Western communication, by the route of the James and Kenhawa Rivers; and, although embarking late in the internal improvement system, is manifesting a feeling in regard to it strongly indicative of her conviction as to its importance. Maryland lies between the States here mentioned, and, with as deep a stake in the Western trade, at which they are all aiming, enjoys naturally far greater advantages to facilitate her attempt to secure it. The Chesapeake Bay, along the eastern shore of which one of the principal works indicated in the internal improvement act is to be constructed, and with the commercial caputrium of the State at its head, penetrates so far westward as to place Baltimore nearly to the waters beyond the Alleghenies than any other city on the Atlantic seaboard; and the advantages thus possessed by that city continued to be experienced, in its monopoly almost of the western trade, until the adoption of better plans of internal communication, by diminishing the cost of transportation from Philadelphia and New York, and compensating for the greater distance of those cities from the West, and attracted to them the greater portion of that trade which had before centered in Maryland. Were the distance from Philadelphia and New York to Pittsburgh the same as from Baltimore, it might perhaps be well questioned whether Maryland should aid, to any extent, in the completion of works that would, after all, place her out in equal competition with these rival cities, and having to contend against the capital already accumulated in them, and the set of business in that direction. But the case is far different; and Maryland has only to open avenues to the West of equal excellence with those that now lead from Philadelphia and New York, to restore to her own chief city all those advantages which, while turnpikes were the best known mode of intercommunication, made it the third city in the Union. The western merchant will seek that market to which he can get his produce transported, and purchases returned home to him, at the least cost; and when the cost of transportation between Baltimore and the Ohio River shall, mile for mile, be the same as from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, Baltimore, nearer than either Philadelphia or New York, will be, as of old, the market that the west will seek. About propositions as plain as those here stated, we think there can be no doubt; and we cannot but believe that the Legislature, firm to the liberal, prudent and wise policy indicated in the internal improvement act of May, 1836, will do every thing that may be necessary and proper to give to it the most full and efficient operation. To have passed such an act, clogged with restrictions and conditions, which would render it a dead letter, never could have been the intention of the Legislature. The design, made evident by the legislation of the last ten years, was to afford the powerful and sufficient aid of the State to the accomplishment of certain great works of internal improvement, in which she had a vital interest, while, at the same time the means of doing so were such as appeared calculated to obtain the desired ends upon the most satisfactory and advantageous terms. If the means suggested, in the first instance, should prove to be impracticable, it is the part of a wise policy to modify them, in such manner as may be found necessary and proper to accomplish the intended objects of the Legislature. Should it therefore appear, when the subject comes before you, that a change in the terms of the internal improvement law of May, 1836, is essential to the objects therein provided for, we cannot doubt that you will do what may be necessary on your part to accomplish the State's system of internal improvement, on the Eastern and Western Shores, and to preserve to Maryland, or rather to bring back to her enjoyment, those advantages in her competition with her sister States which nature has given to her, both along her Eastern border and towards the Western waters, and which it has been the wise and prudent policy of the State's Legislature, heretofore, to improve. Not only is this important in relation to trade and facilities of intercourse with the West; but, in a pecuniary point of view, it is most desirable. Capital is unproductive, because of the unfinished character of the works in which it is invested, will be made to yield adequate return, and, like the internal improvement systems of New York and Pennsylvania, ours will become a productive source of revenue, whenever it shall be completed.

We herewith submit for your information such Reports as we have been furnished with in relation to the progress, present condition and future prospects of the several works of improvement patronized by the State, marked I. and J.

Connected with the internal improvement system of the State, so far as it is to be carried out by legislative aid, there is a subject to which we are at this time required, in an especial manner, to call your attention, and that is, to the payment of the interest on the State's loans in an equivalent to gold or silver, and not in a depreciated currency. These loans were made when the paper currency of the country was convertible, at pleasure, into coin, the only legal currency, at par and the faith of the State was pledged to its creditors for the payment of the interest in such legal currency. The suspension of specie payments has had, as is well known, the effect of depreciating the paper currency; and the public creditor to whom this interest is now tendered in bank notes, if he accepts it, receives a less sum than the State guaranteed to pay. It has so happened that the paper currency has been but eight or ten per cent. below the par of specie, and the loss to the creditor has not been intolerable; but this does not alter the principle involved; and the faith and character of the State are placed in as much jeopardy, *at least*, by tendering payment of interest on its loans in a currency ten per cent. below par, as though the paper currency offered were worth but one cent in the dollar. It is believed that, upon the recent suspension of specie payments, there were but two States in the Union, having foreign loans, which have not paid their interest in specie, or its equivalent; and one of these States is Maryland. The case was one that had not been provided for; and the Treasurer did not feel that he would have been justified to assume the responsibility of paying the interest upon the State's loans in a different currency than he received from her debtors and paid to her other creditors. It is now, however, most respectfully suggested, that it is due to the State's honor and high reputation—that it is essential to the maintenance of that credit, especially abroad, upon which she must rely in any attempt to make additional loans for her works of improvement, or other purposes, that the interest on her obligations for loans (a large portion of which is held in Europe, or on European account) should be paid in specie or its equivalent; and that this should not only extend to future payments, but should relate to those that have been made since the suspension of specie payments.

We feel assured that, in making these suggestions, we are only anticipating what will be the feeling of the Legislature—that we are expressing the wishes of the people of the State, jealous of her credit, and regardless of all minor considerations when the question is whether that credit shall be maintained.

The subject of Education has been frequently and cogently addressed to Legislative attention, in the annual communications of the Executive, but we desire again to bring it particularly to your notice. The general diffusion of Education among the people is necessary to the safety of our liberties and the stability of our Republican institutions, and consequently demands at your hands zealous and fostering efforts to accomplish it. When the people know their rights they will maintain them. When they know their duties they will discharge them. When they become acquainted with the principles and structure of their Government; its adaptation to their wants and to the security of their liberties, they will appreciate their pri-

ileges, and set the part of good citizens to deserve and maintain them. That government which is based upon abstract principles of Republican liberty, if it be not cemented by the education of the people, must be unstable and of uncertain continuance. The arts of the demagogue and the machinations of ambitious and corrupt rulers may triumph over ignorance, but will always meet the rebuke and defeat of an enlightened community. It was the profound remark of a wise philosopher who asserted "knowledge to be power," and its power is never more manifest or more usefully employed than in curbing the stretches of tyranny and toiling the unhallowed designs of restless and ambitious aspirants for that fame which rests upon the ruins of their country.

The increased means of the State, arising from the Surplus Revenue of the United States deposited in our Treasury, afford the means of extending the invaluable blessings of general Education, which should not be omitted to be effectively employed by the Legislative Guardians of the public weal for that purpose.

Our present common school system is very imperfect and, it is believed, in many respects, radically defective; and we recommend it through revision and the adoption of such modifications and extensions as may serve to remedy and perfect it.

Permit us to invite your attention to the propriety of passing such laws as may be necessary to prevent a growing abuse of the elective franchise, which has become so serious as to require Legislative interposition and correction. Every citizen who possesses the requisite qualifications is entitled to the uninterrupted exercise of the right of suffrage. Nothing should be done to limit or embarrass it. The genius of our free institutions has placed every citizen upon a level, and invested each with a voice in the administration of public affairs. But in proportion as this right is precious ought we to guard against its abuse. The existing laws are not adequate to prevent illegal voting. There is too much basis for the complaint that the elective franchise, particularly in our large commercial emporium, has been frequently and shamefully abused. A law requiring every voter within a specified time, anterior to the election day, to have his name registered by a proper officer or tribunal to be appointed for that purpose, appears to us to be the proper and effectual remedy; and we take occasion to suggest its adoption, or some other measure which will be equally effective, to the consideration of the Legislature.

The Topographical and Geological Surveys instituted by the State have progressed with all the expedition that the nature of these important works would allow; and the high character and professional ability of the gentlemen to whom their execution have been intrusted, assure their completion as early as may be consistent with the nature and extent of their necessary researches. The operations of the Topographical Engineer have been suspended during the past year. The accompanying letter marked K, will explain the reasons of the suspension, which we are sure will meet the approval of the Legislature as they face of the Executive.

The liberal and comprehensive scheme of developing our internal condition and resources embraced in the institution of these surveys, promises to afford the most useful and gratifying results, and deserves the continuing patronage of the Legislature. The means of obtaining a complete and accurate knowledge of the topography of the State, and the vast resources of Agricultural and Manufacturing Wealth that lie embedded in her bosom, have been too long suffered to remain without the reach of our citizens.

By reference to the reports which have been made from year to year, and the report of the Geologist, which we are advised will in a few weeks be transmitted to you in the usual printed form, it will be apparent that invaluable benefits have already resulted from their researches. In addition to the large advances made towards procuring a complete and accurate Map of the State, which is the peculiar duty of the Topographical Engineer, it must be a source of Legislative approval, that the examinations of the Geologist have resulted in the development of Agricultural resources before unknown or unappreciated, in the discovery of valuable deposits of Marls and other means of enriching our soil and increasing its produce, and of mines of Iron and other Ores and valuable Clays, which, in the hands of manufacturing industry, may be made of invaluable product, and in the important additions which have been secured to the cause of scientific equality.

Heretofore the researches of the Geologist have been principally confined to the tide water districts. When, in fulfillment of the duties of his office, he shall have extended his operations to the other portions of the State, where our mineral wealth is nearly concealed, we have no doubt that the value of this branch of the Scientific survey will be cut and universally appreciated.

Complaints having been made of the extravagant cost of prosecuting the surveys, we have taken some pains to ascertain at what expense similar works are executed in those of our sister States which have instituted them, and we feel authorized to say that the Maryland works have been conducted more economically, or more cheaply than others of the same kind in any other portion of the Union.

The extensive and important changes proposed to be made in the Constitution by bills which passed the General Assembly at the last session, will of course engage your serious attention and coming as you do immediately from the people after they have had due time to consider those changes, we cannot doubt but that your action upon them will be in conformity to the public will, and we trust quiet the agitation which has long prevailed upon the subject embraced by those bills.

We herewith present the annual report of the Board of Managers appointed under the act of December session, 1831, chapter 281, entitled, "An act relating to the People of Color of this State," and it gives us pleasure to call the attention of the Legislature to the diligence and success of the gentlemen whose gratuitous services have been rendered to the State since the adoption of the system indicated in the act last mentioned.

The plan of independent State action first suggested in Maryland—pursued by the State Society—and countenanced by the managers of the State Fund,—appears to us to be that which is best suited to the condition of the slaveholding States of the Union. It repudiates all foreign and unbidden interference, whether by the General Government, societies or individuals, with the subject of Slavery within the limits of the States where it exists, and leaves it to such State, exclusively, to adopt such measures in regard to it, as are suited to its peculiar circumstances. The plan has here been so far successfully pursued, as will be seen by the accompanying report, that there is now in prosperous existence on the coast of Africa, a settlement of near four hundred emigrants from this State, under the separate control of the State Colonization Society, appropriated to the use of emigrants from Maryland and now capable of receiving any number that may be prepared to emigrate.

It has often been said that colonization was antagonist to the schemes of the immediate abolitionists; and that where the former was cherished and flourished, the latter could find no favor. The Report of the managers of the State fund and the experience of every observing and reflecting man in the State must prove this; nor could we suggest a more certain method of keeping down that wild and fanatical spirit, which has thrown so many firebrands among the slaveholding States, than the adoption and maintenance of the colonization plan, upon the footing on which it now stands in Maryland.

It is gratifying to learn from the Report that the attempts secretly made by the friends of immediate and general abolition to defeat the agents of the society in their efforts to inform the free people of color of the advantages of emigration, are losing the effect which they at first appeared to have, and that there is now the prospect of a constant emigration from the State to the colony of Maryland in Liberia. It would be injustice to the managers of the State fund, and to the

State colonization society, not to express the satisfaction that is felt with the economical, prudent and energetic course pursued by them the past year.

The annual Report of the Treasurer of the Western Shore, which will shortly be laid before you by that officer, in conformity to law, will show the condition of our finances, and enable you to judge what further legislation, if any, may be necessary in reference to them during your present session. The balance of funds on hand at the end of the last fiscal year, besides special deposits on interest in several of the banks in Baltimore, and such as have been appropriated to education, the sinking fund, and other special objects, is about fifty thousand dollars greater than the balance at the end of the previous year; and the general State of the Treasury, we believe to be quite as good as was anticipated at the termination of the last session of the Legislature.

The documents herewith transmitted marked M. N. O. P. and Q. have been received from the Executives of the several States of Maine, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Missouri, and each contain Resolutions of the General Assembly of those States respectively on different interesting subjects, and are laid before you in compliance with requests contained in the several communications.

It is with no ordinary sadness of feeling that we advert to the death of the Hon. Joseph Kent, late a Senator of this State in the Congress of the United States, of which you are of course already apprised. Maryland has suffered a severe loss in his demise, and her citizens who mourn over this bereavement will long cherish his name in grateful remembrance. The devotion to the interests of his country which characterized his long life of public service; the unlimited confidence in which he was held by all who knew him and particularly by his fellow citizens of his native State; the exemplary purity and urbanity which distinguished his public conduct and made him an ornament of private life, render his decease a public calamity and a source of unfeigned and universal regret. We are sure that this imperfect tribute to his memory will find a response with the members of the Legislature and the people, your constituents, whose private regrets you can truly represent and mingle with your own.

We have forbore to exercise the authority vested in the Executive of temporarily filling up this regretted vacancy, because we preferred to leave you, who are more immediately from the people, and are more conversant with their wishes, to your untrammelled selection. We make no doubt, that from among our fellow citizens you will choose one for this eminent and responsible station, who will carry to the discharge of his duties, the confidence of the community and the ability to assert and maintain our rights and interests and the rights and interests of our common country.

A vacancy also occurred, early in the past fall, in the board of Executive councillors by the lamented death of the Hon. Gwinn Harris, its President, which has been supplied by the election of Benedict J. Heard, of St. Mary's county, to serve for the residue of the term of our late associate and friend.

We cannot forbear a public tribute to the memory of our friend and official brother. For three successive years he had been honored by the Legislature with the station of an official adviser of the Governor, and his advice in that capacity, as it always proceeded from an anxious desire for the public good and an enlightened intelligence of his duties, was never without its due authority. An intimate private and official acquaintance for years justifies us in the funeral eulogy, that he was a warm friend, an honest and intelligent man, an accomplished gentleman and a devoted public servant. As a testimony of public respect for the memory of the deceased, we have given directions that his remains be removed, at the public charge, from Berkeley, in Virginia, where they now repose, to his own family cemetery, in Charles county, in this State.

This communication having, from the extended notice which we felt it our duty to take of the principal subjects treated of, become of sufficient length, as we fear, to weary your attention, if not exhaust your patience, we shall forbear to trouble you, at this time, with a detail of our views upon other matters, or of our proceedings in relation to the special duties devolved on us by the General Assembly. In reference to such, we shall make you a further communication in a few days; and we shall hold ourselves ready and prepared to furnish you such special information in relation to any business within our jurisdiction as you may at any time desire to possess.

In conclusion, we promise you our hearty co-operation in whatever measures you may adopt calculated to advance the interests, preserve the rights and maintain the dignity of the State:

And have the honor to be,
With high consideration and respect,
Your obedient humble servant,
THO. W. VEAZEY

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

- MONDAY, December 25th, 1837.
- This being the day appointed by the Constitution and Form of Government, for the meeting of the General Assembly of this State, the following members appeared.
- For St. Mary's county—James R. Hopewell, John M. S. Cassin, William Ford, and George Crane, Esqs.
 - For Kent county—John McDaniel, John Usilton, Ebenezer Welch, and James H. Gale, Esqs.
 - For Anne Arundel county—McLane Brown, Leonard Iglehart, and Cephas Simmons, Esqs.
 - For Charles county—Samuel H. Beall, John Hughes, William D. Merrick, and James D. Carpenter, Esqs.
 - For Baltimore county—John C. Orrick, Thomas C. Ristow, Hugh Ely, and James Turner, Esqs.
 - For Talbot county—John B. Kerr, John Boyle, and Francis E. Jump, Esqs.
 - For Somerset county—Alexander S. Jones, Charles C. Carroll, John T. Adams, and Richard Lemmon, Esqs.
 - For Dorchester county—William Frazier, John F. Eccleston, Nicholas L. Goldsborough, and Reuben Tall, Esqs.
 - For Cecil county—Charles W. Parker, John W. Comegys, John Evans, and Johnson Simpers, Esqs.
 - For Prince George's county—Thomas F. Bowie, William H. Tuck, Robert Gieselin, and Henry L. Coombs, Esqs.
 - For the city of Annapolis—Richard Swann, Esq.
 - For Queen Anne's county—Samuel T. Harrison, Esq.
 - For Worcester county—Teagle Townsend, Ebenezer Hearst, and James Powell, Esqs.
 - For Frederick county—Daniel S. Byser; John W. Geyer, Geo. W. Ent, and Ezra Cramer, Esqs.
 - For Harford county—William L. Forwood, James Nelson, and Israel D. Maulsby, Esqs.
 - For Caroline county—James Carter, John Boon, Jr., and John Jump, of Elijah, Esqs.
 - For the city of Baltimore—Francis Gallagher, Esq.
 - For Washington county—John H. Mann, Michael Swingley, and John Witter, Jr., Esqs.
 - For Montgomery county—Robert M. Beam, Henry Griffith, of Lytle, and L. A. Dawson, Esqs.
 - For Allegany county—John Neff, Daniel Blocher, Jonathan Huddelson, and Michael C. Sprigg, Esqs.
 - For Carroll county—John B. Boyle, Jacob Shower, James G. Berret, and Jacob Powder, Jr., Esqs.
- A sufficient number of delegates being convened, they severally qualified in the presence of each other, agreeably to the Constitution and Form of Government,
- And then adjourned until to-morrow morning 10 o'clock.

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