

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF LOTTERIES,
Baltimore, 26th January, 1833. }

*To the Honourable
the Chairman of the Committee
on Lotteries.*

SIR:—

Your letter is at hand, making the enquiry "whether in our opinions legislation is necessary upon this subject, and what, if any; also asking our views as to the general effects of the system." In reply, we have the honour to state, that we believe the system is now upon as good a footing, both as to profit and safety to the state, and the protection of individuals against fraud, as it can be placed, and that no change is necessary; the citizens are protected against fraud by the superintendance of officers selected for that purpose, as well as to protect the interests of the state, who are wisely excluded from having any interest in the schemes drawn by them, and who are also acting under the solemn obligation of an oath, to discharge their duty fairly and faithfully. There is perhaps some little ambiguity in some minor provisions of the existing laws, but they are not conceived to be of sufficient importance to justify the troubling of the Legislature in regard to them. As to the effect of Lotteries under any form of organization upon the community, our opinions are perhaps not expected, but we will take leave to say, with all candour, that our opinions upon that subject are as as we humbly apprehend, in unison with that of the great body of our citizens, that it is deleterious as is confessedly all manner of gambling, under what form so ever it may exist. But it is well known, that in every community, disposition to risk money in games of chance does exist, and that it will find indulgence in despite of laws and penalties, no matter how severe. Could this be controuled or entirely extinguished, none would be found more sincerely to rejoice in it, than the humble individuals who now address you, but this is known to be impossible to human effort; it then becomes the part of wisdom, so to direct this propensity, as to do the least possible harm to the subjects of it, and at the same time, not only prevent its doing evil to the community at large, but if practicable, to turn it to their advantage—this we do believe, has been effected by Lotteries, many of those who venture in them, being prevented by the facility afforded through them indulging their disposition for ga-