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Gentlemen, it seems to me that in determining your action upon this subject, your attention will be properly directed only to two inquiries: 1st, Whether the completion of the Canal by the State to Cumberland would cause an increase of net revenue, beyond the interest on the cost of its completion; and 2nd, Whether the State possesses the ability to complete it.

The only information in reference to the first inquiry, not furnished by the numerous reports of the Committees on internal improvement, made at previous sessions of the Legislature, is the important fact, that since those reports were made, the various Coal & Iron Companies in the vicinity of Cumberland have connected their works by rail roads with the basin of the Canal at that point, and that the Canal would consequently receive immediately upon its completion, a supply of those articles for transportation. In regard to the second inquiry, I do not think a doubt can be entertained in the honesty & energy which by the people, through their representatives, to meet the public engagements; and the additional security which the completion of the Canal would afford to the State creditors, will enable you to embrace the prospect of relieving your constituents from taxation, which is offered by the completion of this gigantic enterprise.

It may be proper to remark, that by the retrocession of Alexandria, the eastern terminus of the Canal is now placed within the limits of Virginia, and to suggest the probability that our sister State may be now found willing to join with Maryland, in completing this grand enterprise, commenced under her auspices, and projected by the Father of his Country.

May not Virginia, in view of the benefits which would result to her citizens from the completion of the Canal by Maryland, be induced at least to concede to the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road, (in which the people of this State have as deep an interest) the right to seek a western terminus, within her limits.

There were two laws passed by the last Legislature, to which I wish especially to invite your attention. The first is the law amending the Constitution, by the substitution of biennial, for annual sessions of the Legislature, and the second is the law reducing the salary of the Governor, after my term of service shall have expired. This legislation was occasioned by the laudable desire of your predecessors, by retrenching the expenses of the State, to enable her with greater certainty to resume the payment of her liabilities, and to continue to meet them, as they shall hereafter occur. The conflicting effects, in my judgment, of the two laws, upon the object of the Legislature in enacting them makes it my duty, to explain somewhat in detail, my views of their practical operations.

The biennial session bill, as an amendment of the Constitution, having been submitted to the vote of the people, and having received their sanction, ought to will I suppose certainly receive your confirmatory action, and thus become a part of the fundamental law. The annual expense of the Legislature proper may be estimated at fifty thousand dollars and the incidental expenses, including appropriations for specific objects, &c. &c., may be estimated at twenty thousand dollars, making the direct and incidental cost, of each session of the Legislature, about seventy thousand dollars. The direct result therefore of the confirmation by you, of this amendment of the Constitution, will be to lessen the demands upon the Treasury by an amount equal to the annual sum of thirty-five thousand dollars.

Looking to this constitutional amendment, as I propose to do, solely as a measure of retrenchment, no one could doubt its salutary effects, if it were viewed without reference to the other measure of retrenchment to which I have adverted. The importance to the revenue of that annual supervision hitherto exercised by the Legislature over the disbursing & collecting officers of the Government will be