

decision. Article II, section 21, of the present Constitution, makes it necessary that services of Counsel, employed by the Governor, shall have been performed, before the Legislature can allow compensation. This case not having yet been determined by the Supreme Court of Louisiana, before which it has been carried, no appropriation, for that purpose, is now asked for. I, however, recommend the passage of a resolution, ratifying the appointment of Counsel employed by me; and, giving, the sanction of the State, in a more complete and formal manner, to the proceedings heretofore taken, by my authority. This precaution is important, upon legal grounds, which it is not advisable here to enumerate.

I have received and herewith transmit to you, the Report of the Board of Directors of the Maryland Penitentiary. It is an unusually able and interesting document; and, deserves your careful consideration. You will find that, owing to causes therein detailed, it is shown to be impossible to sustain that Institution, solely by its own unaided resources. Its condition, (as contrasted with that of most other Prisons, in this Country,) is really prosperous; and, reflects credit upon those, who have charge of its varied and embarrassing operations. The present policy of the law, is, that, the Penitentiary shall maintain itself. Experience has demonstrated the impracticability of such a design. It is asking more, than most other similar Institutions, elsewhere, have ever been required to perform. The Board suggest two modes of relief. Either, that the salaries of Officers be charged upon the State Treasury; or, that a permanent appropriation be granted, of an amount certain, for each year, sufficient to cover the estimated annual deficit, as shown by past experience; and that, it may be made payable in advance. The former mode is preferred by the Board, as a financial measure. Should it be adopted, it is then proposed that, the Institution shall account, annually, to the Treasury of the State, for the net profits. In either case, the actual contribution, by the State, would not exceed, yearly, the sum of ten thousand dollars. If this system is to be established, it will be necessary, first, to clear the Institution of its present liabilities; in order that, it may start, anew, unencumbered by old embarrassments. The Report affirms that, in consequence of repeated financial difficulties, the Institution has been compelled to purchase manufacturing material, upon long credits, (at the highest prices, therefore,) and to incur heavy discounts, for the use of money; occasioning an aggregate loss, in the last twelve years, which would more than pay the aggregate deficiency of the last four years. It is absolutely indispensable that, something should be done. It is worse than useless, to make irregular appropriations, after the mischief has been effected, and all the losses have been sustained. Whatever may be the aid, which you determine to grant, let it be opportune and systematic.

It is a source of great gratification, to me, to have it in my power to inform you that, the corner stone of the House of Refuge, for Juvenile Delinquents, has, at length, been laid. The work has been commenced; and, we may hope to see, before very long, this Noble Charity lift its head, in our midst. To reclaim Men from vice, is a higher obligation, than to punish them for their crimes. And, what shall be said of the duty of a civilized and Christian State, in regard to the reformation of the young and the ignorant? If the State is the Parent of all, shall not the soul of the Child, abandoned by her, cry out, from the dark depths of its iniquity, for retribution? That voice will not go unheeded! The Government, which builds Rail Roads, and digs Canals, cannot plead poverty, in answer to the moral and social necessities of the governed. When millions of dollars are invested in stocks; surely, thousands may be devoted to virtue. If I thought it possible that, any man could be insensible to this view of the subject, I might speak of it, as a matter of political economy; and, show that, it is cheaper to reclaim a youth, than to pursue an expert villain, through life, to the gallows.