

Nothing has influenced more fatally the evil councils by which so many of the States have become involved, than the delusive expectations re-kindled constantly as fast as they are quenched, of pecuniary largesses from the national treasury for State purposes. The distribution law, (miscalled the deposit act,) which beggared the general government, whilst but few of the recipients of its bounties have been enriched, caused a most unfortunate revolution in public feeling, if not in public opinion. The possession of that fund, stimulating as it did the wildest public speculations, destroyed at once, all those salutary restraints founded in the habits of the people, and the condition and powers of their local governments. An inexhaustible fountain of wealth, it was believed, had been opened, which was to flow in perennial streams into the State treasuries. State legislators, it was thought, were no longer to be limited in their operations, or abridged in their expenditures, by the amount of revenue they might be emboldened to take directly by taxes from the pockets of the people. A new source of supply was to come through the breach made in the Federal Constitution. Private property was to be obtained for public purposes, by a less perceptible, because more circuitous route. High tariffs were to be levied to supply, not only the demands of the national treasury, but in conjunction with the land sales, to furnish a surplus for distribution, after that deposited was exhausted. Under the influence of these and similar delusions, the large and oppressive debt of Maryland has been contracted. And now, when the people are groaning under the weight of the taxes imposed, we have an exhibit of their share of the vast amounts expected from the national treasury, in a sum insufficient to pay the interest on a few bonds held in trust for tribes of Indians. This is the result of the land bill. It is as fruitless as ashes. This melancholy and mortifying disappointment to most buoyant hopes, should warn the tax-payers not to be tantalized by specious devices. Our public debt, if paid, must be paid out of our own resources. Whoever thinks otherwise, follows a phantom.

The evil consequences, threatened by our State liabilities to our institutions, are greater far in the measures they have prompted as a means to escape their direct payment, than their effects as invasions of the rights of private property. There is an energy and elasticity in the American character, that will soon cause the whole country to recover from its present depression, without governmental aid in any form. But there is cause to fear that errors of opinion, growing out of our pecuniary difficulties, as to the nature of our complex and beautiful system of government, may not be so soon eradicated. Unlimited authority to dispose of the public lands, was not seriously and generally claimed for the government of the Union, until after the power to consummate a grand system of roads and canals was denied to be in Congress. After that, the deeds of cession for that part of the national domain lying east of the Mississippi and north of Florida, were so construed as to make language, declaring expressly that the land ceded to the United