

and past events have established, beyond all question, that in some cases at least, they are unsafe depositories, as they have failed completely in the discharge of their official duties, to answer the expectations of the Legislature. This being the case, something must be done to guard against a continuance of the open resistance to the legislative authority; which has characterized their proceedings. Already has the failure to execute the laws throughout the entire State, engendered among that portion of its citizens, who have cheerfully borne their part of the burthen, a feeling of discontent, and it will, in all probability, it is feared, unless efficient measures be at once adopted, increase the dissatisfaction to such an extent, as to make the execution of the tax laws hereafter, next to impossible. The citizen who willingly complies with the requisitions of the law, has a right, undisputed and indisputable, to insist upon the like compliance of all others. It is manifestly unjust, to exact a part of the earnings of a portion of the people only, for public purposes, under the provisions of a law designed to act upon all. If a portion of the people be allowed to withhold all contribution, the law ought to be repealed. It is not therefore to be considered strange, that the non-payment of the public dues on the part of the citizens of some of the counties, has created an anxious desire with those who have conformed to the requirements of the laws, that the Legislature should adopt some measure, vigorous and efficient enough, to ensure the faithful and impartial execution of its enactments, or adopt some other mode of maintaining the honor of the State, operating equally on all. Fully convinced both of the justice and absolute necessity of some such action on the part of the Legislature, I cannot too urgently invite their earliest attention to the subject. What the measure shall be, it is for them to determine. But, judging by past events, I am myself thoroughly impressed with the conviction, that if the tax laws are ever enforced, with uniformity and impartiality throughout the entire State, it must be, by the certain, and decisive exercise of some central controlling power.

The government of Maryland now occupies, in some respects, the same attitude to the counties, as did the Continental Congress towards the several States under the old articles of confederation,—exercising the vain power of passing revenue laws, but too feeble to enforce obedience to them. Prior to the adoption of the Federal Constitution, Congress had the power of making requisitions upon the States, for their quota of the general charge and expenditure, but inasmuch as the power to raise the required sum resided exclusively in the State authorities, there was but little certainty, at any time, that these requisitions would be gratified. The prejudices of the people of some of the States carried them so far, that it was no uncommon thing for a State wholly to fail to adopt the measures, necessary to enable it to meet the demands of the central government. Seeing this, the patriotic statesmen of that day were convinced, that a government capable of maintaining its own sovereignty and faith, should be authorized to act upon individuals and not