

REPORT.

The undersigned, of the committee on Ways and Means, to which was referred so much of the Governor's Message, as relates to the Finances of the State, begs to submit, on his own behalf, the following

REPORT :

The obligations of the State to make good her engagements, on account of the public debt, are not to be questioned.

If the public indebtedness had even been contracted without authority under the Constitution, the result would simply be, that money borrowed and used by the State for her own purposes, had been obtained on a contract void from the beginning; and nothing would remain for her but to pay it back.

It is not, however, the characteristic of an honest people to seek any evasion of a just obligation. How much soever the people of Maryland may deplore the rashness and extravagance with which the State, under the popular sanction, went forward in her policy of Internal Improvement, the conviction is doubtless complete in the bosom of every one who feels and thinks rightly, that as a community, the money of other people has been obtained by us on a pledge of the public faith; that it has been expended by us under our own direction; that the benefits of its expenditure are for us and our children; and that by every obligation which can bind a man as a moral being who knows what justice is, and who can distinguish between honor and dishonor, we are bound to pay fully what we justly owe.

In all such portions of the report of the majority of the committee, as recognize and enforce the responsibility of the State, and the duty of citizens in this behalf, the undersigned concurs entirely. This paper, which he now has the honor to submit to the House, is offered in the hope, humbly yet truly entertained, that it may contain some suggestions, adapted to make more sure the end contemplated by the majority's report—an end so important to the State, so essential to her honor, so intimately conjoined with the vital elements of her political and social existence as a civilized community, that its attainment should not be left subject to doubt, when by any possibility it may be secured.