

ring the coming year will amount to \$15,000; exclusive of the tax on the Baltimore City Stock, and the Stocks of the Banks of the State.

Prior to the last June Term of the Court of Appeals, I requested the Attorney General to embrace in the tax cases, which were to be argued, all the questions which had arisen under the various tax laws, that they might be all settled by the decision of the highest judicial tribunal of the State; and I will furnish you, for your information and guidance, with the decision of the court upon the tax questions which were raised and decided.

The direct tax law specifies as one of the subjects of taxation "all Ships and other vessels owned by citizens of this State." From this source the State has hitherto derived no revenue; the owners of Ships and Vessels insisting that the tax imposed was in violation of that clause of the Constitution of the United States, which confers upon the General Government the power to regulate commerce. By reference to the decision of the Court of Appeals you will see that the constitutionality of this tax is sustained.

The registered and licensed tonnage belonging to the port of Baltimore on the 1st of October, 1845, amounted in value to \$2,172,220, to which must be added the tonnage registered at the other ports of the State, the value of which I have not ascertained.

The revenue from the direct tax for the coming year will be consequently increased by the tax upon this description of property from 1841 to the present time, and will furnish a valuable item in your estimate of means to meet the demands upon the treasury. It will be necessary however for you to consider whether the assessment of this species of property has been fully made, and whether some legislation is not necessary to render the tax upon it fully available.

By the act of 1843, chapter 189, the collection of the direct tax upon the stock of the city of Baltimore was also taken from the city collector, and the register of the city was required to pay it into the treasury. This tax I also found had not been paid since the passage of that law; and with the view to such legal proceedings as might be necessary, I requested the Attorney General to call upon that officer to ascertain his determination in regard to the payment of this tax; he at once expressed his determination to comply with the law unless otherwise *officially* instructed by the City Authorities, by whom he was appointed; and I am pleased to inform you that this tax for the present year, amounting to the sum of \$9,497 34, has been paid, leaving still due, the like sum for the tax of the past year, in reference to which you will make such provision, or give such instructions as to you may appear necessary and right.

As the direct tax must be looked to by you for the greater portion of the means to meet the demands upon the treasury I was impressed with the paramount importance of supply-