

portion as the Spirit of Man, and the magnitude of his temporal destiny transcend the unconscionable Earth, upon which he treads. Surely, it is for this, above all other blessings, Gentlemen, that we should humble ourselves in thanksgiving, before the August Benefactor of the Nation.

In my last Annual Message, I so fully expressed my views in regard to the legislation suggested by the new Constitution, that a repetition of them herein would be superfluous. I again respectfully invite your attention to the amendment of the election laws—the revision of the criminal code, especially in regard to the inequality of punishments—the Acts of Assembly relating to pardons and the remission of fines, forfeitures and penalties—the modification of the tax on civil commissions—the ascertainment of the number and respective salaries of the deputy clerks, or other assistants, to be hereafter employed by the Clerks of Courts and Registers of Wills; at least, so far as relates to the City of Baltimore; in order that the spirit and intendment of Article III, Section 40 of the Constitution, which limits the compensation of Clerks of Courts and Registers of Wills, severally, to the sum of twenty-five hundred dollars per annum, over and above office expenses and the pay of assistants, may not be practically defeated, by the payment of exorbitant salaries or the employment of unnecessary deputies—and the legislative construction of Article X, Section 1, which fixes the sum of three thousand dollars as the limit of the annual compensation of public officers. Upon this last subject, it may be well to remark that some have doubted as to whether or not a gross or a net income of three thousand dollars is contemplated. I think that there can be no question upon this point. The Constitution must intend simply to abolish exorbitant incomes; and it has accordingly established a maximum. There are offices in the State, which would not only be valueless, but absolutely a burden to the incumbents, if the opposite construction were admitted. The necessary expenses, therefore, of each office should be allowed out of the gross receipts; and the extent and character of those expenses should be well defined by law.

It is generally believed that the offices of the Clerks of the Courts of the City of Baltimore, yield large revenues from fees to the incumbents, greatly beyond what would be required to pay their Constitutional salary of twenty-five hundred dollars each, after the deduction of reasonable Clerk-hire and all other necessary expenses. One year has now elapsed, since the election and qualification of the present incumbents; so that, any law which you may pass, for the purpose of carrying into effect the fortieth section of Article III of the Constitution, should be made retrospective; in order that, a settlement for the past year may be promptly obtained. I also again urge upon your consideration, the propriety of the adoption of an entirely new system, for the issuing