

REPORT.

The Committee to whom was referred the memorial of the Nanticoke Indians beg leave respectfully to submit the following report :

The petitioners state that they are the descendants of the Indians who formerly inhabited the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and for many years a tradition has existed among them that there was a balance due on account of relinquishing the lands which they once possessed in Maryland to the Proprietary Government, and among the last emigrants, who were few in number, there were no chiefs who had the power to cede their lands, but they were promised that whenever authorised persons should come forward and convey the land, a just compensation should be paid for the same. Three times within the last twenty years have they made strong appeals to the Legislature to render them justice, and in view of the character of the application, and the belief, honestly entertained among the Nanticokes, that we are indebted to them, the committee deem it proper to place upon record, the reasons which influenced them in making their report. One of their friends, in writing to the committee, remarks that they are a poor, helpless, suffering race, and constantly diminishing in numbers, and destined to become extinct. "We are driven back," said one of their aged warriors, "until we can retreat no further. Our hatchets are broken—our bows are snapped—our fires are nearly gone out. A little longer and the white man will cease to pursue us, for we shall cease to exist." To attempt at this day to answer all the demands which might be made by the Indians, in consideration of the sacrifices made by their ancestors, would probably require more means than the State could command; but, by all agreements into which their fathers and ours entered, we feel bound; and, if convinced of their existence, will certainly do all that can be required to fulfil our part of the obligation. The Indians of Maryland were not like those of some other regions, continually at war with the whites, but a friendly intercourse subsisted between the two races, and for kind services rendered the colonists, many favors were granted them. In fact, it appears, from an examination upon this subject, that the policy of Maryland towards our red brethren has always been of the most peaceful and friendly character, and the committee recurring to an early period in the history of the colony, find that at a session of the General Assembly, held at St. Mary's, on the 13th of