

## REPORT.

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The committee on finance, to whom was referred the bill from the House of Delegates entitled, 'an act to regulate the sale of distilled spirits, and intoxicating liquors,' have had the same under consideration and respectfully report,

That, regarded in relation to its effect on the revenues of the State, in which aspect it is more peculiarly the province of this committee to examine its tendency, the enactment of the proposed law would be productive of serious loss and unqualified injury.

The bill provides that no distilled or intoxicating liquors shall be sold within the limits of the State except for medicinal, mechanical, artistic or sacramental uses, and only by persons appointed by the judges of the circuit courts for the several counties and the city of Baltimore; that there shall not be more than ten in each county and the city, each of whom shall pay the sum of fifty dollars on his appointment.

If the whole number act and pay the stipulated tax, the aggregate will be eleven thousand dollars: the revenue derived from licenses to ordinaries, during the past fiscal year was \$81,613.33, which being relinquished would inflict on the treasury a loss of more than \$20,000.

The traders licenses yielding \$72,000 would be seriously affected. The smaller stores would not be maintained, and the larger, denied the traffic in a lucrative article now permitted, would in justice be entitled to a rateable reduction of the tax imposed on them, for which it was a part of the consideration.

A large amount of capital employed in the liquor trade, and invested in establishments for the manufacture of distilled and malt liquors, would be diverted to less profitable channels, driven from the State, or impaired in extent, and by such diversion or reduction diminish the resources of the treasury.

Indirect, but more disastrous injuries would result from the damage inflicted on the trade and prosperity of the city of Baltimore. The reputation of a commercial community is extremely sensitive, and interference by law to restrict, direct or control its business must be well advised, not to prove detrimental. If the