

safeguard will be provided, within the scope of constitutional authority. In this connection it may not be amiss to advert to some provisions of a precautionary character evidently under legislative control.

The readiness with which in these times many seem to find the means of absolving themselves from the obligation of the oath so frequently taken to support the Constitution of the United States, has already suggested to you the importance of so modifying that oath as to make it as precise and comprehensive as possible. Such an oath, thus remodelled, should not only be administered to all employed in the civil and military service of the State, and to all engaged in the administration of justice, but it is well worth your consideration whether it would not be advisable to require such an oath, or some other more appropriately adapted to the circumstances of the case, of all, who under the authority or license of the State, are engaged in commercial pursuits. That hundreds of such persons are constantly seeking opportunity to trade with the enemy, some influenced by the love of lucre, and others by sympathy for the rebellion, is a fact too notorious to be disputed. And whilst, perhaps, no oath that could be prescribed, would in all cases restrain such illicit traffic, it would seem to be but the exercise of a proper precaution always to require it.

The necessity of a liberal provision on your part, to enable our State to discharge her part of the duty of suppressing this rebellion, to pay her quota of the national tax, and to aid in organizing and equipping her volunteers, has been already so distinctly called to your attention in a recent message of my predecessor, that little remains for me to add. It is hardly necessary to say, that I cordially concur in his suggestions; clear and cogent as they are upon their face, they will, I am sure, particularly command your confidence, from the fact, that they are *his* suggestions; for, who can so well advise for our security and peace in the future, as he who has so faithfully and successfully preserved them amidst the extraordinary perils of the past.

I approach to day the duties of the office, with which I have been honored by the people of Maryland, with a profound sense of the responsibilities with which it is surrounded. They are such as might well cause one of far greater experience and ability to shrink from their encounter. My chief encouragement comes from the reliance I place on the enlarged patriotism and eminent ability of those to whom the people of the State have committed its legislative functions. Looking confidently to that support, and trusting to the protection of the great Governor of all who has hitherto so mercifully preserved us, I am ready now to take the oath which the Constitution prescribes, and under His overruling Providence, will endeavor faithfully to observe it.