

powers, rights and duties of the several public functionaries, to whom the sovereign people have confided the management of their affairs, it would seem that peace, order and harmonious accord, in all its internal operations, should ever attend its progress. Such has hitherto been eminently the case within our own state, and, with few exceptions, it has, so far, been no less the happy fortune of our sister states, and of the Union. Time may now be said to have demonstrated to these United States the inestimable value of the form of government, devised by the enlightened patriotism, and brought into successful operation by the patriarchal virtues of our ancestors; but it has equally shewn that human wisdom can devise nothing, however excellent, which may not, by human ingenuity, be perverted. It is in vain to hope to be entirely freed, by any form of government, from the workings of those adversary principles, between the governing and the governed, which have marked the history of mankind through all time; and whilst our admirable constitution may be found to have done, and be still capable of doing, much towards preserving the just balance of our political system, it must ultimately prove but a weak barrier against the inroads of ambition and power, unless strengthened by the constant devotion and guarded by the wakeful vigilance of the free people, to whom it is the "sheet anchor of hope." Whenever the people of this country shall become indifferent to this subject; whenever they shall fail to rally with alacrity and zeal to the repair of any breach, which may have been made in the palladium of their liberties; then shall we have passed our meridian as a confederated Republic, and be rapidly descending to servility and despotism.

We transitted (as was made our duty) to His Excellency the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, two reports of a joint committee of the Senate and House of Delegates and sundry resolutions of the General Assembly, at its last session, on the subject of our southern and western boundaries, and the long pending controversy with Virginia in relation thereto: And, in further compliance with the directions of the General Assembly, we selected and engaged the services of two additional counsel—Bene S. Pigman and Joseph J. Merrick, Esquires,—to assist the Attorney General, in con-