In August last, a communication was received from the President of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road Company, respecting the rate of fare for passengers on the Washington rail road, and detailing facts to which may be ascribed, the falling off of the receipts from that source; & suggesting, whether the Executive, on a consideration of them, would not feel himself authorized to direct a reduction. The President of the company was informed, in answer to this communication that the Executive did not feel justified in interfering in this instance, inasmuch as the Legislature, at its last session, had the whole subject under consideration and did not think proper to act. The attention of the Senate and House, is respectfully invited to this correspondence, which will be submitted.

A full and satisfactory report of their proceedings for the last year has been received, and will be transmitted, from the President and Directors of the Maryland Penitentiary. From it, the total profits of the institution during that period, appear to have been $30,275 29, and the expenses inclusive of the salaries of officers, $29,791,63, leaving an excess or nett profit in favor of that institution of $483 66. It is stated, that the relief afforded by a resolution of the last session of the Legislature, has been signally beneficial in its application, to the objects for which it was intended, and through it the mercantile credit of the institution has been maintained without interruption and that its operations have been beneficially conducted.

By the acts of December session 1827, chapters 140 and 173, and the acts of December session 1833, chapters 28, making provision for the education of the indigent blind and deaf and dumb of the State, it is required of the Governor, annually to inform the Legislature, what amount has been expended for those purposes. During the past year the sum of $1,828 43, was expended for the education of the deaf and dumb and the sum of $1 562 31, for the education of the indigent blind.

A commissioner was appointed in pursuance of resolution No. 32, of last session, to examine upon oath, witnesses touching the sanity of Frederick Fritz alias Bruker, convicted in Carroll county Court, at April term 1841 of Murder — The testimony upon the subject was voluminous, and of such a character, to induce the commutation of his sentence to confinement in the Penitentiary house of the State for life.

In obedience to resolutions No. 19 and 46 of last session, the repairs directed by them to be made to Tobacco Warehouse No. 2 in the city of Baltimore, and to the Magazine at Annapolis, were completed for amounts less than those authorized by the Legislature.

The [illegible] Cumberland, has increased the amount of tobacco consigned to the Baltimore market, so that the public warehouses do not afford room for its reception. That this trade, desirable alike, on account of the stockholders of the road company, and the commerce of our commercial emporium, may be properly provided for an enlargement of the buildings designed for its accommodation, would be expedient.

Reports have been received, and will be laid before you from the Superintendent of the National Road west of Cumberland, and from the President of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company

The report of the Superintendent affords evidence of the ability and faithfulness, with which that officer has performed his duties.

The report from the canal Company will attract, deservedly, particular attention. It contains valuable information, as to the condition of the vast amount of public property committed to the care of the directors. Whatever may be the opinions entertained, as to the policy of undertaking that great enterprize, with the means of Maryland almost alone there ought to be now no diversity of sentiment, as to the justice and patriotism of essaying, to open a canal communication form Cumberland to Tide Water. This is due to the creditors of the company, whose chances of being remunerated for their labor are gloomy indeed, if the work is left, as it now is, a costly ruin. It is due to the public creditors, that a strenuous effort should be made to adopt some measure, to render available the large investments of the State in that company. In these opinions, all the humane, patriotic and unprejudiced amongst our constituents, may concur. But it is no easy task to point out a mode, in which these desirable results are to be attained With a full view of the whole subject before them, the President and Directors of the company have recommended a measure which is submitted respectfully to your consideration Nothing, however, has occurred to change the opinions expressed in the annual message of last year, when the policy to be pursued in the completion of the canal was briefly examined.

Looking to the enviable central position of our State in the Union, with her noble bay and flourishing commercial emporium, ensuring all the advantages of an extended and profitable commerce with other nations; considering that Maryland is rich in mineral, agricultural, manufacturing & mechanical resources; & confiding in the bold enterprise the acknowledged patriotism, and high sense of honor of our constituency, we may confidently predict, that the day is not very distant, when our State, relieved from the shackels of bad laws & of onerous taxation, will come in to line with the most favored of her sister States, in the resistless progress all are making to prosperity, happiness and power, not to be rivalled by other nations of the earth. In any measure calculated to hasten the coming of such a day, and such a destiny for our common country the Senate and House are assured, that the whole constitutional powers of the Executive, will be most promptly and cheerfully exercised.

FRANCIS THOMAS.

CONGRESS.

Correspondence of the American.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 28, 1843.

IN SENATE.

A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury conveyed the report of the Commissioner of the Land Office, which shewed an increase of sales over last year owing to the pre emption law.

A message from the President was received relative to the mounted howitzer.

OREGON.

Mr. Atchison's Bill for establishing a Government in this Territory, was twice read and referred to the Select Committee on this subject.

Mr. Allen submitted a resolution calling on the President to furnish, if not incompatible with the public interest, copies of instructions to the American Minister in England relative to Oregon.

The Senate held a short Executive session, did nothing but refer nominations; and adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE HOME SQUADRON.

Mr. Hale's Resolution, presented two days since, and designed to operate against the Home Squadron came up as the order of business. Mr. Hale spoke at length upon the growing expenses of the Government, and especially in the Naval service of the country. He declared that the Government was expending vast sums of money, more than it received; that the Department most extravagant was the Navy Department; and that therefore, reform ought first to begin here. When the Naval Appropriation Bill came up, he should follow up his opposition to the Home Squadron, by moving that all the Squadrons be reduced. They were much too large in the Mediterranean, Pacific and other seas. Our Navy had become a pageant. It was a pet child of the country, and likely to run away with all the patrimony.

Mr. J. R. Ingersoll, and Mr. Morris, of Philadelphia, (the last a new member,) made very eloquent speeches in defence of the Navy, and against what they regarded as innovations to break down the Naval service.

Mr. Giddings, of Ohio, continued the debate. He was in favor of the resolution under consideration, and in favor of reducing the expenditures of Government.—He was for maintaining inviolable all the interests of the country, and all the departments of the public service. He would as soon stand by the constitutional rights of the South as of the West.

He went for the rights of all The West had been neglected, but now, in her strength she demanded an equal distribution of the benefits of the Government [illegible] val service to five millions of dollars.—He would unite with other members to bring down this branch of the service to this amount. The Home Squadron, if he was not misinformed, had been prostituted to unholy purposes, and had been engaged upon the Coast of Florida, he had been told, in pursuing fugitive slaves.

Mr. Levy, of Florida, in his seat, said that there were murderers among them.

Mr. Giddings said his constituents desired to know the truth of this matter, and they expected to get it by inquiries from the proper Department. He supposed that his constituents had been taxed for two objects—first to put down the slave trade on the coast of Africa, and secondly, to sustain the slave trade on our own coast. He desired to know the truth of all these charges, and to be informed of the actual service of the Home Squadron.

The previous question was moved, but no quorum voted upon the second.

An adjournment was moved, but withdrawn to enable the Speaker to present several documents from the Executive Departments.

Before the adjournment Mr. Rhett, of S. C. sent a letter to the Speaker, which the Speaker laid before the House, declining to serve upon the Select Committee to act upon the resolutions from the Massachusetts Legislature in reference to Slave representation. Mr. Rhett's reasons for asking to be excused are that the question of Slavery cannot, under the compact, be touched and that to legislate upon it, would be a violation of the Constitution.

MR. ADAMS AND MR. C. J. INGERSOLL.

The correspondent of the U. S. Gazette gives an account of Mr. Adams's speech on the Home Squadron question. To give some idea of the course pursued, we copy from the National Intelligencer the following part of its report.

My friend from Philad. (Mr. Ingersoll) was I recollect very ferocious, about that time, for the burning of London [a laugh] with our navy; he told us it could be done; and if our naval force was not equal to it then, he was ready to go on and increase it till it should be strong enough to sail up the Thames and burn London. [Roars of laughter.] Yes, sir, London: not Chatham, which I believe some Dutch admiral did once set fire to, or attempted it.

Mr C. J. Ingersoll here, amid much surrounding merriment, interposed to explain, and Mr Adams assenting, he stated that he had only proposed to burn London in return for what the gentleman from Massachusetts had proposed, viz. to take a British fleet up the Mississippi and burn Natchez! [Laughter.]

Mr. Adams. I burn Natchez? I take the British fleet up the Mississippi? I never proposed any such thing. I bring a British fleet up the Mississippi to burn Natchez? Oh no, sir. This is an afterthought.

But I come back to the motion made by the gentleman from New Hampshire, (Mr. Hale,) and I must say I was not a little surprised at the quarter from which a motion like that should come—a quarter the most interested, certainly, in having due protection provided for our coasting trade, and consequently in the maintenance of a home squadron. I believe that when the project of a home squadron was first broached here I was myself a good deal in its favor, and if I remember right, I voted for it.

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll. Yes; there were in fact but three voting against it.

Mr. Adams. Ay: & that was because this House did not then know what it was for. I hope they now do know what it is for. Sir, it looks to a war with Great Britain—to this first, and then to the fact that in that event the coast will require a large squadron for its defence It is proposed to go to war with Great Britain in case she should take a fancy to take Cuba.—*That* is the reason for increasing this home squadron. That's it. It is WAR sir.

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll here said he was very anxious to put one question to the honorable gentleman from Massachusetts: would the gentleman allow him to ask him one question?

Mr. Adams. Why, I believe not, sir. If the gentleman wants the floor to put questions to me, I think I had better not yield it, for I do not want to be questioned by the gentleman just now. What question does he want to put?

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll. I ask the gentleman would he let Great Britain have Cuba? would he?

Mr. Adams. I ask the gentleman in turn, is he ready to go to war with Great Britain? is he?

Mr C J Ingersoll Without one moment's hesitation, sooner than let her take Cuba.

Mr. Adams I believe so. I believe the Gentleman is ready; and as that is at least a possible event, this home squadron appropriation is meant to provide for it.—I am against a war, and I believe the country is against it, and that they will support the proposition of the gentleman from New Hampshire. I believe that the morals of the country are not so deeply corrupt as to be prepared to go to war with Great Britain for the sake of a company of Creoles: no, nor yet for the sake of annexing Texas to the Union: for that is another of the objects in view.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania said that it is not by reducing the expenditures in the army or the navy that we can effect a reduction in our expenditures. No; but by administrative measures here, at home. Well, sir, suppose we shall adopt at once, the British plan, and let the members of this House and the members of the Senate serve without pay. Suppose we strike out the items of our pay and mileage, and all the other expenses, as well of Congress as of the Executive, what will the saving be: At the outside, but two millions.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 2 1844,

IN SENATE.

The President of the Senate presented the credentials of the new senator of Maryland Hon. MR PEARCE, which, at the suggestion of his colleague, were placed on file.

Mr. Buchanan presented a petition from Jos. Stowe and others, who were confined at Dartmoor during the late war; they pray congress in consideration of their age and poverty to make provision for their support; also one from the city and county of Philadelphia on the subject of French Spoliations; also one from Jno. Fish, who represents that he is a manufacturer of oval bake-pans and frying pans and that the duty on the raw material exceeds that on the manufactured article so that the discrimination is *against* the manufacturer. Mr. B presumed that no bill on the subject of the Tariff could originate here, but moved, however, the reference of the petition.

Mr. Merrick, from citizens of Baltimore, praying for a reduction of postage, which Mr. M said must be made in order to save the Department from its present ruinous competition with private expresses.

Mr. Jarnagin, by leave, introduced a bill for dividing the U. States into two military districts.

The Senate went into Executive session, and soon adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll, moved that the House suspend the Rule to go into Committee of the whole upon the Bill to refund the fine imposed upon General Jackson.

Mr. Adams, hoped the morning would be devoted to the reception of Petitions.

The yeas and nays were called upon Mr. Ingersoll's motion (a vote of two thirds being necessary.) The yeas were 105 and nays 45 –two thirds, and the rules were supended.

The House then resolved itself into Committee of the Whole. Mr. Davis of Indianna in the Chair.

Mr. Barnard of N. Y. was entitled to the floor, and addressed the House in a long and able argument against the Bill. Mr. B reviewed with much clearness the transactions connected with Gen Jackson's conduct and the imposing of the fine upon him by Judge Hall. He considered the conduct of the General as unparalleled and outrageous, and he defended the conduct of Judge Hall. In this House, he said, his name had been covered with obloquy. He had been charged with being prejudiced in favour of the British, with being a coward, and with being an inebriate—and supposing it to be true, because he was prejudiced, because he was a coward and because he was inebriate, General Jackson had a right to set at defiance the law of the land. But these charges Mr. B. proceeded to show were unjust. From those who knew him he proceeded to prove that he was above all party or faction designs, a simple and true hearted man, deeply learned, and correct in his habits He was appointed by Mr. Jefferson, and removed by him from Charleston to receive the appointment.

The exercise of an authority like that of Gen. Jackson's, (the establishment of martial law) was one of the principal causes of the Revolution of 1688 The crime of Gen. Jackson was suppressing the Government and establishing martial law. No plea of necessity could excuse such an act. In case of insurrection the civil laws might, under the Constitution, be suspended, but no where was there power to establish martial law instead of it. It was a direct, palpable, inexcusable violation of the Constitution.

Mr. Dawson of La. continued the debate and commenced with a handsome and elaborate eulogy of General Jackson —of the man and his conduct. The question before the House was not a party one, he contended. It was a proposition to do justice to a great and injured man, The House were not called upon to do more than to decide whether under all the circumstances of the case, Gen. Jackson was excused for declaring martial law.

Mr. Kennedy, of Indiana followed with a zealous speech in defence of the Bill. He would, for one, declare that the money was unjustly filched from the pockets of General Jackson by a traitor. He desired, however, not to impeach the conduct of Judge Hall, for he knew nothing of it, but for the conduct of General Jackson he would say that it was glorious. His great offence in the mind of many was, and it was one for which they would never forgive him, that he had conquered the British. The fine imposed on him was unjustly laid. He was ready to say so in the Bill before the House, and if the gentleman from New York wished to discuss the question upon that ground, he was ready to say

—'Lay on Macduff.

And damned be he who first cries hold.—enough.'

Mr. Grider of Ky. followed. He condemned certain contemptuous remarks which the gentleman preceding him had uttered against the Judiciary, & proceeded to show wherein the conduct of Gen. Jackson and Judge Hall were both worthy of commendation. He considered General Jackson's conduct in the payment of the fine imposed upon him as worthy of all commendation, but he did not believe that General Jackson would now receive the money. He thought by doing so he would greatly detract from the glory awarded him in the payment of the fine. Mr. G. did not believe there was a man upon the floor who was not willing to award to General Jackson the highest meed of praise for his services to the country, but while they were ready to do this, they were not at all ready to vote to sustain a General in establishing martial law.

Mr. Dean of Ohio, among many competitors next got the floor and addressed the House in a violent party speech in favor of the Bill. Mr. D. declared that the question before the House was of a party character. The Whigs were against the Bill and the Democrats were for it, as during the war the Federalists were for the British and the Democrats against them. The conduct Judge Hall was [illegible] annous and oppressive, and no excuse was to be found for it. He was, in Mr Deane's opinion, a corrupt Judge — Gen Jackson's conduct at New Orleans was such as commended itself to the patriotism of every man of common sense. Those who would have done or advised differently would probably have been glad to have seen New Orleans surrendered to the enemy.

Mr. D. was upon the floor when I closed.

Maryland Legislature.

ANNAPOLIS, Dec. 28, 1843.

IN SENATE.

Nothing of interest transpired in this body to-day.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

Present the same members as on yesterday.

On motion of Mr. Phelps it was ordered that a Committee of retrenchment consisting of seven members be appointed by the Speaker, to whose consideration shall be referred all subjects which have for their objects the curtailment of the public expenditures.

In pursuance whereof the Speaker appointed Messrs Phelps, Wootton, Carroll, Curley, McKaig Warfield, and Shriver, the Committee.

Mr. Phelps submitted the following order: Ordered that when this House adjourn, it stands adjourned until to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock, and thereafter the House meet daily at 10 o'clock A. M. and sit till 3 o'clock P. M.

On motion of Mr. Causin, said order was amended by striking out the words ten o'clock,' and inserting 12 o'clock.

On motion of Mr Ecker, it was ordered that the Committee of Retrenchment be instructed to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the office of Examiner General & to blend the duties thereof, with that of the Register of the Land Office, and of abolishing the office of Armorer.

On motion of Mr. Calvert it was ordered that the Committee on Grievances and Courts of Justice, inquire into and report to the House, whether the Baltimore Wilmington and Philadelphia Railroad Company has not violated its charter, by entering into combinations prejudicial to the public interest.

Mr. Carey submitted the following order:

Ordered, that the Committee on Retrenchment be directed to enquire into the expediency of fixing by law the salaries of Registers and Clerks of counties and requiring said officers to pay, into the Treasury, all fees and perquisites of office received by them.

Which, on motion of Mr. Calvert, was amended by adding to it the words 'all the fees of all other public officers' and then it was adopted.

Leave was granted to Mr. Semmes, to bring in a bill, entitled 'an act to modify or abolish the postage privilege of members of the Legislature.

Mr. Yellott obtained leave to bring in a bill to confirm an act passed at December session, 1842, ch. 276, proposing to alter the Constitution, so as to take from the Legislature the power of making any future issue of State bonds—which was referred to Messrs. Yellott, Johnson, Murray, Carey, Thomas, of Talbot, Kilgour and Poultney.

Mr. Powder offered the following order —which was adopted.

Ordered, that the Treasurer report to this House, the amount of Direct taxes due from each County, Baltimore City and Howard District, for the years 1841, 1842 and 1843. And also the amounts paid for each year.

The House then adjourned.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

Dec. 29, 1843.

Mr. Hollyday submitted the following message, which was read, assented to and sent the Senate:

Gentlemen of the Senate,—We propose with the concurrence of your honorable body to proceed to the election of a Senator in Congress, this day at 1 o'clock, P. M. to fill the place made vacant by the expiration of the term of service of the Hon. John Leeds Kerr. We have nominated on the part of this House, James Alfred Pearce Esq.

On motion on Mr. Carey, leave was granted to the Committee of Ways and Means to bring in a bill to tax legacies and collateral inheritances.

Mr Potter obtained leave to bring in a bill for the purpose of dividing the State into six congressional districts; and to refer the same to a select committee to be composed of one member from each county, and the city of Baltimore.

The Speaker appointed Messrs. Potter, Johnson, Yellott, Stansbury of Baltimore county, Levering, Stewart, Hopewell Weems, Chapman, Bowdle, Harrison Boteler, Hearn, Ghiselin, Lackland, Spencer, McKaig, Lankford, Naill, Stull and Kilgour, the committee.

The clerk of the Senate delivered the following message:

Gentlemen of the House of Delegates, —We have received the message of your honorable body, proposing to go into the election of a United States Senator, this day at 1 o'clock, and concur therein.—We have appointed Messrs. Gaither and Bowie to join the gentlemen on the part of your honorable body to count the ballots and report the result. No other gentleman is put in nomination by the Senate.

Mr. Yellott submitted the following:

Ordered, That the chief clerk be authorised to furnish the members of this House, for the present session, with such newspapers as they may direct, the expense whereof for each member, not to exceed the rate of one daily newspaper: determined in the negative by yeas and nays, as follows:—Yeas 19 —Nays 56.

One o'clock having arrived, the house proceeded to the election of U. States Senator, to represent this State in the [illegible] of the United States, for six years from the fourth day of March last

The ballot box was prepared, and the ballots deposited therein. It was then delivered to Messrs. Hollyday and Thomas of Anne Arundel, who had been appointed, conjointly with the committee of the Senate, to count the ballots and report the result. They retired, and after a time returned and reported, that on examination of the ballot box, it appeared there had been ninety-six votes given in all, of which James Alfred Pearce Esq received fifty-nine votes, and that there were thirty-six blank votes and one scattering. Whereupon it was declared that the Honorable James Alfred Pearce, is duly elected a Senator to represent the State of Maryland, in the Senate of the United States, for six years from and after the fourth day of March last.

Mr. Welsh submitted the following resolution:—Resolved by the General Assembly of Maryland, That the Treasurer of the Western Shore, be and he is hereby authorized to pay the several members of this General Assembly and the several officers thereof, or to their respective orders, any sum or sums of money now due, or which from time to time may be become due to them respectively; and for which they shall obtain certificates from the chairman of the committee on claims of the present House of Delegates—ordered to lie on the table.

Dec. 30, 1843.

Mr. Potter presented the petition of sundry citizens of Caroline county, praying for the establishment of a located school in the lower district of said county.

The Committee on Elections and Privileges, beg leave to report the following —Ordered, That speedy measures be taken to cause an election to be held in Dorchester county, to fill the vacancy in the delegation of said county, caused by the death of Joseph Nicols, Esq. according to the Constitution and laws of the State of Maryland—which was read the first and by special order the second time and concurred in.

On motion of Mr. Potter—Ordered, that a Committee of five members be appointed on the Penitentiary, in pursuance whereof, the Speaker appointed Messrs. Potter, Hopewell, Carroll, Franklin and Schriver, the committee.

Jan. 1, 1844.

Several petitions of a private character were presented and referred.

On motion of Mr. Phelps it was "Ordered That the Committee on Ways and Means be and they are hereby instructed to inquire into the propriety and practicability of so modifying or changing the law of Dec. session, 1842, ch. 301, entitled 'An act to sell the States interest in the internal improvement companies and to pay the debts of the State,' so as speedily, if possible, to effect a sale of the State's interest in said internal improvement works, and to apply the proceeds of such sale to the discharge of the State liabilities.'

On motion of Mr. Cathell, leave was granted to report a bill to reduce the number of members of the Legislature.

On motion of Mr. Johnson, the Treasurer was directed to assertain and report relative to the withholding of the sum of $39,652,42 by the Susquehanna and Tide Water Canal Company, &c.

Mr. Alnutt asked leave to report a bill to separate the collection of the direct and county taxes so far as relates to Charles County. Mr. Johnson moved the reference of the leave to the committee on Ways and Means, which motion was advocated by Messrs. Calvert, Carey and Johnson; and opposed by Messrs. Dalrymple and Powder, who desired its reference to the Calvert delegation. But it was finally referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

A bill to reduce the number of members of the Legislature, was reported, and ordered to be printed.

The House adjourned.

The Senate adjourned early after the transaction of some private matters.

Jan. 2, 1844.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

A communication was received from the Executive, enclosing a report, of the directors of the Maryland Penitentiary and various circulars from State Legislatures, upon different subjects; which were appropriately referred.

The Speaker laid before the House a statement from the Treasurer, in obedience to an order of the House, which exhibits that the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company have paid into the State treasury from the 1st Dec of each year for the years 1837, to 1843 the sum of $460,606 84; and that the State, during the same period, paid $299,100 00 as interest on its bonds; leaving a balance in favor of the State of $161,506 84.

Mr. Johnson reported a supplement to the act of March session, 1841, ch. 23, for the valuation and assessment of the real and personal property of this state. Ordered to be printed.

Mr. Potter presented a memorial of citizens of Caroline County, praying to have a deed made valid. Referred.

On motion of Mr. Calvert, the Committee on ways and means were directed to inquire into the expediency of disposing of the Bank stocks held by the State, to aid in paying the debts of the State.

Mr. Carey submitted a message to the Senate proposing to go into the election of Bank Directors on the part of the State, and nominating the following persons:

For the Farmers' Bank of Maryland, Alexander Kilgour, Robert Ghieslin, and Thos. J. Hillen.

Mechanics' Bank of Baltimore, John R. Magruder and Wm. H. Gatchell.

Hagerstown Bank, Michael A. Finley, and Isaac Newcomer.

Farmers Bank at Easton, James E. Barroll, Thos. H. Hicks, and James Turner.

The message having been adopted, and sent to the Senate, and a favorable response given, the members of the two branches proceeded to ballot, which resulted in the election of the above named gentlemen. The House adjourned

Correspondence of the American.

ANNAPOLIS Jan. 2nd, 1844.

A Bill was reported yesterday from the Committee of Ways and Means which may be said to constitute the first of the series of measures necessary to place the State upon the basis of punctual payments to her creditors. This Bill provides for the restoration of the rates of assessment to the scale of 1841, as made under the provisions of the Act of that year. The Governor's Message and the Report of the Treasurer, both, referred to the course pursued in some of the Counties in which the local Commissioners had cut down the State assessment by a sweeping horizontal reduction. In the city of Baltimore, it appears, the same course has been pursued. Nearly twenty millions have been thus struck from the general levy list, causing a diminution to the amount of fifty thousand dollars in the annual revenue due under the Direct Tax law.

This sort of per centage reduction of the assessments made by the State authorities, finds no countenance in the law of 1841. The local Commissioners had power under the law to rectify error in individual cases upon cause shown; the act gives them authority also to make the proper abatements when property is removed from the County, &c. But to strike off twenty five per cent, as was done in some instances from the original valuation of certain kinds of property, was an unwarrantable proceeding. By such a course, if adopted in every County, and repeated from time to time, the foundation of the whole system or revenue from taxation would be undermined and the operation of the law defeated.

The Bill reported from the Committee restores the original basis of taxation, viz. the valuation under the Act of 1841.—This was, in general, a moderate valuation, and if the value of property has changed since, it has rather increased than declined.

You will have noticed a bill from a select committee, Dr. Phelps, chairman, to amend the Constitution so as to establish biennial sessions of the Legislature. The Bill further provides to reduce the term of Gubernatorial service to two years, to correspond. The term of Sheriffs is also reduced to two years. When the measure of biennial sessions was submitted to the people, year before last, I believe, it was accompanied by a provision to extend the Gubernatorial term and the period of the service of Sheriffs to four years. It has been thought that the modifications now proposed will render the whole more acceptable, the objections against the first proposition being regarded as applicable, not to the measure of biennial sessions, but to the proposed extension of the terms of Governor and Sheriffs. I cannot undertake to judge how far that supposition is correct. The change from annual to biennial sessions, if made, will bring with it a considerable reduction of the State's expenditures—which is an important matter. It is probable enough that a session of the Legislature every two years will supply a sufficiency of legislation for all useful purposes—but as the

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