A communication was received from B C Presstman, Esq., Counsellor of the city, which was read and laid on the table:

Baltimore, March 14, 1854.

To the President of the
First Branch of the City Council:

Sir,-

I have received the following resolution of enquiry, which passed the First Branch of the City Council:

"Resolved by the First Branch of the City Council of Baltimore, that the city Counsellor examine the returns of the Commissioners for opening and condemning Bel-air avenue, and report to this branch whether in his opinion the said Commissioners were authorised to make the two returns to the Register of the city, as stated in the Register's report to this branch, dated the 23d of February 1854; and also whether in his opinion, the proceedings of said Commissioners have been in strict conformity with the ordinance appointing said Commissioners and prescribing their duties - and whether, in his opinion, the City Commissioner, if he proceeds to pave said avenue under the present condemnation, can compel those who do not sign the application to pay for the paving done in front of their property - and also, whether the city, in the event of not being able to compel such payment, will not be answerable to the contractor?"

In reply, I have to say, that the proceedings of the Commissioners referred to in this matter of opening and condemning Bel-air avenue, are in my judgment, regular and valid. That the contract entered into by the city Commissioner for the paving said avenue is also in obedience to the provisions of law, and that the property holders binding on the part of said avenue, for which the paving contract has been entered into, will be responsible for the paving tax as in all other cases of paving. There is no responsibility on the part of the city to a contractor for paving in any case; the express provision inserted in every contract for paving, being that the city in no event shall be responsible.

Very respectfully,
Benj. C. Presstman,
Counsellor for the City.

The Second Branch returned the resolution appointing a joint special committee on the communication of the commissioners for opening streets, endorsed "concurred in".

The President appointed on said committee, on the part of this branch, Messrs. Bouldin, Boyd and Simms.

The resolution relative to enquiries as to the practical operation, &c., of the steam fire engine now in use in Cincinnatti, was received from the Second Branch, read and "concurred in".

Mr Weathers presented the petition of Robert Carickson, asking the city to lease him a wharf on West Falls avenue, which was read and referred to the joint committee on the harbor.

Mr Zimmerman called up the resolution in favor of Henry Reiman & Sons, which was read and adopted.

The Second Branch returned the resolution discharging the committee on police and jail, from the further consideration of the subject of appointing city bailiffs, endorsed "Concurred in".

Mr Hunt offered the following resolution, which was read and referred to the joint committee on education:

Resolved, that the board of commissioners of public schools be, and they are hereby authorised to purchase the use of the wall, erected and adjoining on the rear of the lot of public school No. 8; provided the price paid for the same shall not exceed one hundred and three dollars.

Mr Simms offered the following resolution, which was read and referred to the joint committee on highways:

Resolved by the First Branch of the City Council, that the City Commissioner be, and he is hereby directed to have stepping stones placed at the south side of the corner of Eutaw and Henrietta streets.

Mr Rogers called up the resolution adverse to the petition of Alfred Griffith, which was read and concurred in.

The following message was received from the Second Branch, read and laid on the table:

In Second Branch,
Baltimore, March 14, 1854.

Gentlemen of the First Branch:

We respectfully inform you that we have appointed on the joint special committee on the communication of the commissioners for opening streets, of the 7th inst. Messrs. Griffith,