of taxes in arrear and not likely to be collected in time to meet the wants of the city. The entire system I hold to be defective, and I shall take an early opportunity to suggest to your honorable bodies such modifications as I have reason to believe will greatly facilitate the collection of the city taxes. It is a reproach upon a city, having ample resources at command, to be driven to the necessity of postponing her obligations by asking indulgence from banks and elsewhere. The collection of the taxes should be under one supervision; and instead of an auditor to take charge of the arrearages at the end of the year, they should be continued in the hands of the collector, with an increase of the number of his deputies, if needed, to be accounted for by him, with instructions to adopt the necessary measures in connection with the city counsellor to insure their prompt payment.

The duties assigned to the Mayor under the present organization of the city government are such as to preclude the possibility of his giving a thorough and satisfactory examination into the general affairs of the corporation, which would seem to be required at his hands. The smallest transactions are submitted directly to him and the time which might be advantageously employed in promoting objects of general interest, is often consumed in mere matters of detail, which might, without the slightest risk or disadvantage, be transferred to some subordinate agent or officer.

I need hardly assure your honorable bodies, that I have no desire to shrink from the discharge of duty which have heretofore devolved up this department; but this suggestion is thrown out altogether in view of the paramount importance of a supervising control over all the departments of the service, which can only be accomplished by relieving the Mayor of the large share of clerical duty which devolves upon him under the existing organization.

It will be for the Council to determine whether it would not be advisable at once to authorize such changes as their matured judgment, after full examination into the whole subject, may deem advisable to sanction. A committee to report upon this and matters of a kindred nature, would enable me to offer suggestions and present measures to reform, which might greatly promote the public interest.

The disposal of all such recommendations, at this time, will not only greatly disembarrass me, in my efforts to advance the general welfare of the city, but will relieve to that extent, the labors which will devolve upon you at the stated annual meeting of the Council in January next.

The protracted reforms which have heretofore marked the progress

of our city's legislation, have not met the approval of a large class of our citizens; and it is my earnest desire so to mature the plans, which may originate with this department, as to facilitate the prompt action on the part of the Council. With a determination, on all sides, to give dispatch to the public business, and to conduct with moderation the deliberations in which you may feel it your duty to indulge, I entertain but little doubt that the most decided advantages may be made to result to all the great interests of the city.

In presenting these views which I have deemed it my duty to urge I invite your friendly and impartial co-operation. This city has just emerged from an excited party contest, in which feelings of bitterness and alienation have unfortunately been engendered. Let me indulge the hope that these will be suffered to subside, and that in the discharge of our public duties, we may not forget that we are members of the same city, bound together by social and business ties - having common interests, and looking to the promotion of a common welfare. I shall use my best efforts in my intercourse with your honorable bodies, to invite harmony and good feeling; and you may rest assured that I shall make no recommendation which I do not honestly believe to be promotive of the public good.

With great respect, your obedient servant,

Thomas Swann, Mayor.

The President appointed Messrs. Simms, Elliott and Henning a committee to report upon the election and qualification of the members of the Branch.

The following message was received from the First Branch and read:

In First Branch,
Baltimore, Nov. 18th, 1858.

Gentlemen of the Second Branch:

We respectfully propose, with your concurrence, that the daily hour for the meeting of the Council be fixed at 5½ P. M.

By order,
John Bunting, Clerk.

Mr. Kintzing moved that the Branch concur in the proposition contained in the message, which was determined in the affirmative.

The following message was received from the First Branch and read:

In First Branch,
Baltimore, Nov. 18th 1858.

Gentlemen of the Second Branch:

We respectfully propose, with your concurrence, the appointment of a