

APPENDIX.

[No. 1.]

RESPONSE OF THE GOVERNOR TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Annapolis, Md., January 23, 1856. }

Hon. A. Kennedy, Chairman of the Select Committee to whom was referred so much of the Message of the Executive, as related to Secret Political Societies.

SIR:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 22d inst., inclosing a copy of the resolutions of the House of Delegates, of the 10th inst., and requesting, in compliance with one of said resolutions, that I would communicate to the Committee such information as I may possess, touching the existence of secret political societies in this State, and of the nature and character of the secrets they preserve. That I may occasion you no delay in entering upon the discharge of the duty imposed upon you by the House of Delegates, I hasten to make you a prompt reply.

I beg leave in the first place to express to the Committee my sincere gratification, that the popular branch of the Legislature, has seen fit thus promptly to respond to this portion of my message, and to institute an investigation relative to the matters therein briefly considered. The subject is one of great magnitude, in every point of view, affecting most deeply the honor of the State, as well as the peace and good order of society, and unquestionably demands at your hands, the most rigid and thorough examination.

I sincerely hope that no time may be lost, and no proper effort spared, in eliciting the truth, in relation to the subject matter of the proposed inquiry.

I regret to perceive from the language of the resolutions of the House, as well as from the debate to which they gave rise, that some misapprehension seemed to exist in the minds of some of the members of the House of Delegates, as to the particular societies intended to be embraced by that part of the message referred to your Committee. The existence of secret political combinations in our own, and other States, has for some time occupied a large share of public attention, and has become a matter of such public notoriety, that, with my clear and decided convictions of their dangerous tendencies, I felt it my imperative duty, as the Executive of the State, to bring to the notice of the Legislature and