

and its commercial metropolis. On the other hand, in the face of the dangers which would seem inevitable, if facilities for invasion were offered to the fanatical and excited multitudes of the Northern cities—whose animosity to Baltimore and Maryland, is measured by no standard known to christian civilization, and who publicly threaten our destruction, without subordination even to the Federal authority—it would hardly be consistent with the commonest prudence, to re-open the avenues which would bring them to our very doors. Indeed, if it were the pleasure of the General Assembly to provide for such a measure, no security would certainly exist for its permanent enforcement, during the continuance of the natural excitement which now disturbs our people.

The instinct of self-preservation is far more powerful than any sense of obedience to law, and coupled as it is, in the present case, with every prompting of resistance to violence and wrong, it would be sure to over-ride all the ordinary restraints to which a free government is capable of imposing. It would be of small avail for your committee to discuss this state of facts, further than to say that it exists, and must be dealt with, carefully and wisely. The channels of intercourse with the Northern States cannot be effectively re-established, without a guaranty, from some quarter, of the safety and peace of Maryland. Your committee are not able to perceive how this result can be attained, without some communication with the Federal Authorities at Washington; and, in their judgment, it is due to the people of this State, whose lives and property are involved so deeply in the contingencies of the unhappy strife which has sundered the Republic, that some such communications should be forthwith opened by the General Assembly.

There are other and independent reasons which render such a course indispensable at this time, to the dignity and interests of the State. Two works of internal improvement, in which she is largely interested, have been seized, in whole or in part, by the General Government for military purposes, to the exclusion of the rights of the State and her citizens. Upon one of those works (the Washington Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad,) the share of the passage moneys belonging specifically to the State, and constituting an important portion of her revenue, has been diverted from its legitimate channels by the strong hand. A part of the soil of the State has been appropriated to the erection of fortifications, without even the form of asking her consent. Her seat of government has been converted into a military depot, to the exclusion of the representatives of her people. Martial law has been proclaimed, and the jurisdiction of her courts ousted, along the whole line of the road which has been dedicated to Federal purposes through her territory. So far as this Committee are advised she has been dealt with, in these regards, as a conquer-