

MESSAGE.

*Gentlemen of the Senate,
and of the House of Delegates:*

I HAVE called together the General Assembly of Maryland in anticipation of the regular Session in January; and it is proper I should briefly recount the events and state the reasons which have led me to that determination.

About the time at which South Carolina passed her Ordinance of Secession, and during several months thereafter, I was importuned to convene the Legislature.

It was urged, with great zeal, that the People of Maryland should have an opportunity of saying whether they would remain loyal to the Government framed by our fathers, or join the seceded States in their mad crusade against the continuance of the Union.

It was alleged that if the Legislature should be convened it would either call a sovereign Convention, or submit to a vote of the people the grave question whether they desired such a Convention to assemble.

The strenuous effort to induce me to call together the Legislature having failed, I was then earnestly desired to submit to the People, by Proclamation, the question whether or not they wished a Convention to be assembled. I declined to accede to this request because, under the Constitution, I possessed no such power.

In thus persistently refusing to comply with those propositions, I am well aware that I assumed a grave responsibility. But I was satisfied, nevertheless, that I was but performing what, to me, seemed to be a clear and simple duty. And for the consequences I was then, and am now, willing to rely upon the justice and good sense of my fellow-citizens; to whom it is due that I explain, as briefly as I can, the reasons which induced my course.