

A portion of the indebtedness of the Northern Central Railroad to the State has been paid into the Treasury; and I have caused such legal steps to be taken in the premises as I deemed necessary.

Reliable information received at this Department in regard to mismanagement of the interests of the Maryland and Delaware Railroad Company, makes it my duty to recommend that you at once take such steps as may be necessary to a thorough investigation of the affairs of that Company.

It will be but an act of justice to a very large, worthy and industrious class of our citizens, if you adopt some stringent legislation in reference to the preservation of the Oyster Beds in our waters.

Since our national troubles commenced, large numbers of persons from other States have infringed upon our rights and violated our laws in this regard; thereby rendering the labors of those of our citizens engaged in taking oysters almost valueless, and greatly damaging the oyster beds.

Experience has shown that our laws are not efficient for the protection of this important and valuable interest; and I trust that you will be able to devise some remedy.

I have heretofore suggested the propriety of issuing licenses to catch oysters; the fund to accrue from the sale of such licenses to be applied to building and keeping in service small steam vessels, whose sole duty shall be to guard against violations of the laws in this respect. I still think the plan a good one, and believe that it will entail no expense upon the State.

I transmit herewith an interesting Report from the Rev. Ethan Allen in reference to the Records of the Executive Department. Also, a letter from John H. Alexander, Esq., in relation to an Index to the first volume of a Calendar of our Domestic State Papers, prepared by him in accordance with an Act of the General Assembly.

These matters possess great interest; and I trust that you will consider it proper to take some action in regard to them.