

MESSAGE.

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

You have assembled in obedience to the command of the Constitution to consider such subjects as require Legislative action, and looking back upon the time that has intervened since your predecessors in office last assembled, it may be safely affirmed that no similar period since the foundation of our Government has been crowded with events of such magnitude and importance.

Although these events are sadly calculated to vary the usual tenor of the congratulations with which the Executive has been accustomed to greet the General Assembly at the opening of every Session, and we can no longer, as of old, recur to the peaceful and prosperous career of the country, as evidence of the Almighty's favor; although the reckless ambition of unprincipled politicians instigating a wicked rebellion has involved us in a civil war of frightful extent, compelling a sacrifice of the best and bravest of the nation to maintain its existence, that very war deplorable as it is, has developed elements of national power hitherto scarcely comprehended, and furnished substantial cause of thankfulness to Almighty God and congratulations to each other.

Such a record of the rapid, resolute and successful production from domestic resources, of all the means and material of war, as the history of the last two years exhibits, is not to be found in the annals of any nation, whilst the success with which these materials have been wielded in restoring the power of the Government over State after State of those lately defying its authority, authorizes the hope, that without some abrupt departure from our past policy or misapplication of these abundant resources, the day is not distant when we shall witness such a restoration in them all.

If the history of the last two years affords us in its connection with the progress and prospects of the nation, such cause