

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

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

Prompted alike by duty and inclination, to render to you in your high character of immediate representatives of the people, an account of the manner in which we have discharged the duties of the important trusts confided to us, as well as to make such suggestions as reflection and experience may have dictated, it may be permitted us first to offer you individually and collectively our sincere congratulations upon your safe arrival, in good health, at the Seat of Government, and to felicitate both you and ourselves upon the generally prosperous and happy condition of our fellow citizens throughout the State.

Although there is much to admire in the annual accounting of those who have been entrusted with the chief Executive power, with the more immediate representatives of the people, and through them with the people themselves, as a beautiful practical commentary upon the theory and principles of our happy form of government; yet confined as we are, chiefly to the circle of our domestic relations, it is not to be expected, nor indeed desired, that there should often be much that is new or of awakening interest in this or similar communications.

Based as our government is upon written constitutions and laws, carefully protecting the rights of every citizen, and wisely distributing and clearly defining the powers, rights and duties of the several public functionaries to whom the sovereign people have confided the management of their affairs, it would seem that peace, order, and harmonious accord, in all its internal operations, should ever attend its progress. Such has hitherto been eminently the case within our own State, and with few exceptions it has, so far, been no less the happy fortune of our sister states, and of the Union. Time may now be said to have demonstrated to these United States, the inestimable value of the form of government devised by the enlightened patriotism, and brought into successful operation by the patriarchal virtues of our ancestors; but it has equally shewn that human wisdom can devise nothing, however excellent, which may not, man ingenuity, be perverted. It is in vain to hope to