

M E S S A G E .

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

THAT the Legislature may have, at an early stage of its session, a general view of the condition of the public affairs of Maryland, custom has very properly imposed upon the chief magistrate, the duty of making an annual communication. At this time, its candid and truthful discharge, (owing to the crippled and disordered condition of the finances of the State,) devolves upon him a high and unusual responsibility, and, if not a mortifying, certainly not an agreeable task.

Highly influential citizens of the State, enjoying the public confidence, and filling stations giving to their opinions undue authority, had united in inculcating the belief, that public and private interests were to be greatly benefitted by the policy which, for many years characterized our legislation. At length, however, the enormous amount of our public debt, destroying altogether public credit, roused the whole people to see and feel the reality of our situation. The apprehensions, very naturally excited by the deplorable condition in which the finances of the State were found to be, were in some degree soothed by the measures of your immediate predecessors, designed as they were, to furnish the means whereby the faith of the State should be maintained, and its engagements promptly met, and fully discharged. But, it has now become my painful duty to announce to you, that these measures have proved inadequate to the accomplishment of the object for which they were designed. This duty, unpleasant and mortifying as it is, imposes however, responsibilities far short of those devolved upon you, who are not only to ascertain and expose the extent of public embarrassments, but, to devise and apply an appropriate remedy. But whilst the Constitution assigns to you this more important labour, it is believed to be not unbecoming for me to declare, that the time has arrived when a decisive and distinct course ought to be adopted and pursued, as being alike due to our common constituency and their creditors. Coming as you do from the bosom of the community; representing every section of the State, enjoying its confidence, and familiar therefore, as you must be, with its wishes, intentions and resources, you are qualified, and doubtless prepared, to examine