

may be found so systematized as to render the desired reformation practicable. I respectfully refer you to my last Annual Message for the reasons by which I was convinced of the eminent propriety of the measure proposed.

I submit for your action copies of a circular letter addressed to me by the Secretary of State of the United States, and of a Consular Convention between the United States and France, by which the President of the United States engages to recommend to those States of the Union, where aliens are not now permitted to hold real property, the enactment of such laws as may be necessary for the purpose of conferring that privilege upon Frenchmen, in consideration of reciprocal rights to be granted by the Government of France to American citizens.

In accordance with the request of the "Agricultural Association of the Slaveholding or Planting States," communicated to me through its Secretary, I herewith transmit a resolution passed by that body, at a Convention held in the City of Montgomery, in the State of Alabama, on the second day of May, 1853, together with the published proceedings of the Convention. It appears that the Association has been organized for the special object of advancing scientific agriculture in the South, and for the general purpose of developing the resources and combining the energies of the Southern States, so as to increase their wealth, power, and dignity as members of this Confederacy.

The Great Seal is much worn by long use. I do not think that it is appropriate. It should, in my judgment, consist of the Arms of the State, and not of a device which has no significant relation to its local history. I recommend that another be provided.

As required by the Constitution, I send you a statement of the disbursements made out of the contingent funds during the past year.

In a few days, Gentlemen, I shall exchange the cares and responsibilities of the Executive Office for the more desirable avocations of private life. Whilst I look forward to my retirement with feelings of great pleasure, I am not, however, unmindful of the obligations which I owe to the people of Maryland. Borne to my native State, as I have ever been, by all the sacred ties which unite a dutiful son to an indulgent mother, I now recognize additional claims to my gratitude and loyalty, created by the confidence and unmerited distinction with which she has generously honored me. I most earnestly pray that Divine Providence may fill to overflowing the measure of her prosperity.

Executive Department, Jan^y 4th 1854. E. Louis Lowe,