

Lib. C. B. His Excellency is pleased to lay before this Board the following Address from the Lower House of Assembly together with Sundry Papers and Depositions thereunto annexed, and likewise his Answer to the said Address.
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To His Excellency Robert Eden Esq^r Governor and Commander in Chief in and over the Province of Maryland.

The humble Address of the House of Delegates.

May it please your Excellency.

It is extremely disagreeable to us to find ourselves under a Necessity of laying before you our Proceedings against Richard Lee junior Sheriff of Charles County. Your Excellency will find by the Papers hereunto annexed which we beg leave to refer you to that this House did early in their Session, as they thought it their indispensable Duty take such Steps as were in their Power to gain the fullest and clearest Information concerning the Facts complained of in the Petitions of John Doncastle and William Wright And tho' our Inquiry has been in part eluded by the Disobedience of the said Richard Lee Junior to the Order and Process of this House we are of Opinion that the Principal Facts charged in the said Petitions are Supported by the Evidence we have been able to obtain. The Condition and Size of the Room in which the said Sheriff confines his Prisoners for Debt the want of Fire in the severe Weather of the last Winter and the Effects thereof on the Health of the Prisoners appear from the Report of our Committee of Grievances and the Deposition of William Wyat Fentham taken before the said Committee, The Fact of tying up and whipping the Petitioner William Wright as set forth in his Petition we conceive is sufficiently evinced by the Record of the said Richard Lee's Conviction and the Fine imposed upon him for that Offence in Charles County Court, Further Evidence it was in the Power of the Sheriff to have enabled us to obtain for the more clear elucidating or refuting the Complaints contained in the said Petitions and his refusing to do so, and declining to appear and abide the Inquiry give us just Grounds to infer his Consciousness of the Truth of the whole. When we reflect how much in the Power of a Sheriff his Prisoners are, and what Opportunities he has from the very nature of his Office to Oppress and maltreat them; when we find our Fellow Creatures reduced by their Misfortunes to the Anguish of a Goal, exposed to all the Miseries of Cold and Wet in the most inclement Season of the year, and one of them over whom the Sheriff had no Lawful Power but that of Confining his Person illegally cruelly and ignomini-