

The undersigned made as thorough an examination of the condition of things on the Maryland mountain opposite Harper's Ferry as the pressure of circumstances, and the almost inaccessible nature of the mountain and its approaches would admit of. The top of the mountain he found occupied by four or five hundred Virginia troops, who had cut down four or five acres of the small and indifferent timber which clothes the summit of the mountain, for the apparent purpose of constructing huts for their temporary shelter, and about the same space of land had been burnt over by accidental contact of the dried leaves with the camp fires, as your commissioner supposed. That as soon as he had investigated all the complaints, he returned to Richmond and reached there on Wednesday, the 29th ult., when the authorities were engrossed with the pressing duties arising from the reception of the President and Government of the Confederate States of America; that on the evening of the 30th he had a short interview with Governor Letcher, and brought to his notice the object of his mission, and the specific acts of aggression complained of in the entrance upon our soil by the troops of Virginia.

The Governor was understood to say that he would apply to the commanding officer at Harper's Ferry for information on the subject, and would be prepared to reply more fully when the report of that officer was received, but he begged me to convey to your honorable body the distinct and earnest assurance that if at any time the military forces of Virginia should trespass upon and temporarily occupy the soil of Maryland, it could only be justified by the pressing exigency of a military necessity in defence and protection of her own soil from threatened or actual invasion, and certainly with no hostile intent towards the citizens of the State of Maryland, and that any and all damages to person or property consequent upon such alleged trespass or occupation should be fully and liberally compensated for. He left with the Governor, at his request, a copy of the resolutions aforesaid, and the letter of Mr. Biggs, and regrets that the distracted state of the country and the uncertainty of communication compelled him to leave Richmond on Saturday morning in order to be present at the reassembling of your honorable body, and before he had received a definite reply from the Governor of Virginia. That as soon as he receives any further communication from him he will make a further report to your honorable body. Your commissioner may be permitted to remark that the people of the western counties of the State adjacent to the canal are much interested in preserving from