

the state in which the person accused is found, would be treasonable, felonious or criminal, by the laws of that State; that no law of New-York, at this time recognised, no statute admitted, that one man could be the property of another, or that one man could be stolen from another; and that consequently the laws of Virginia, making the stealing of a slave felony, did not constitute a crime within the meaning of the constitution."

Your committee have bestowed much reflection on this subject, with the anxious desire to arrive at a proper construction of the law that must regulate intercourse among the States of the union, in all cases of demand like the present. The subject is of the greatest importance at the present time, and especially to the State of Maryland. Her geographical position adds interest to ordinary questions affecting the relations of master and slave; but when in a great controversy like the present, she finds a State where this institution does not exist, denying the right of property in slaves, and refusing to surrender for punishment those who have outraged that right, we should not hesitate to make common cause with the southern members of the union in vindicating our claims, and resisting such attacks upon our domestic policy. We would not voluntarily interfere in disputes between our sister States, but being called upon by the State of Virginia to add our opinion to the weight of hers, in a friendly and respectful remonstrance against what we believe to be a violation of her privileges by New York, we hope it may not be considered unkind, if Maryland obeys the promptings of a common duty, in the assertion of a common right. It would be unbecoming in the Legislature to indulge in censure, or to impute unjust motives towards the executive of New York. Acting under a sense of our responsibility, we cannot deny to him the right of judging of the obligations of his station. Believing that his course was induced by a sense of duty, and that the same motive may effect a change in his action, your committee cannot but hope that an interchange of opinions among the other States will serve to convince him that New York stands alone in the position she has assumed.

It has been the practice of civilized nations to surrender for trial offenders against the laws of others. It is unimportant to know whether this has been done in virtue of an acknowledged perfect right on the one side to demand, and of an obligation on the other to deliver, or whether it has been founded on comity among nations; in either view of the question, the ground taken by New-York cannot be