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SUPREME COURT,
By the act of Congress of the last session, the term of the Supreme Court of the United States is to commence on the second Monday of January, instead of the first Monday of February, as heretofore.

CONGRESS.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, Dec. 26th 1826.
Mr. Ward, of New York, offered this resolution:

Resolved, That the committee on the District of Columbia inquire whether there be in force, in the said District, any law authorizing the imprisonment of any free man of colour, being a citizen of any of the United States, and his sale as an unclaimed slave for jail fees and other charges; and if so, to inquire into the expediency of repealing the same.

In support of this resolution, Mr. Ward said, he was urged to present it not only by a sense of duty, by an obligation to obey the instructions of the citizens of the county of West Chester, which constituted a part of his district. It is known that Gilbert Horton, a free man of colour, and a citizen of that county, was imprisoned in this city last summer, under a law of the state of Maryland. He was advertised, and would have been sold, as a slave, to pay his jail fees under that law, (which now it seems forms a part of the code of this District,) but for the prompt interference of the citizens of that county, at whose solicitation it became the subject of a correspondence between the executive of the United States, and the executive of the state of New York.

Mr. W. held it to be the duty of every Representative on this floor, to guard and protect the rights of the citizens of this union, so far as those rights may come within the authority delegated to congress by the constitution, and therefore do not deem it necessary to apologize for bringing this subject under the consideration of this house. But from the members individually, I crave their indulgence, whilst I offer the few observations which force themselves on my mind.

Whatever the law is, and whatever its origin, it could only have been intended to apply to fugitive slaves. Any other application of it would be at variance with the sacred constitution of the land, and void in itself. That it is unconstitutional is virtually, if not expressly, declared, by the 3d article, and 2d section of the constitution of the United States, by which it will be seen that a free citizen cannot without a trial, and without the allegation of a crime be condemned to servitude for life. The section referred to, provides, "that the trial of all crimes, except in cases of impeachment, shall be by jury, and such trials shall be held in the state where the said crimes shall have been committed, but when not committed within any state, the trial shall be at such place or places, as the Congress may, by law, have directed."

The 4th 5th and 6th articles of the amendments of that Charter, define more particularly the absolute rights of persons, and secure to every free citizen, whatever may be his complexion, the right of personal liberty and private property.

Here Mr. W. read the above mentioned articles.

I might add, that the continuance of such a law in that portion of the nation especially confided to the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress would be no less impolitic than adverse to the motives which concurred in this jurisdiction. It was certainly never intended that the little space of ten miles square, should be the grave of rights so clearly defined by the Constitution, and it could still less have been expected that the wisdom of Congress would have suffered a law so unjust in its operation, to have stained the records of her courts.

That its continuance would be impolitic, is proved by its repeal by the very State which enacted it, and might be easily exemplified in supposing the State of New York will do a retaliatory measure to refuse to surrender fugitive slaves from the District. For the violation of a right is the same, whether made in the face of the law, or under its sanction or colour of a law violating the Magna Charta of the nation.

The law is unjust, because the imprisonment was not for a crime, nor for a debt, and the mere circumstance of his not being claimed as a slave could not strip the freeman of colour of his privileges as a citizen of the free and independent State of New York, and create a debt to which no free act of his had contributed. But, asked Mr. W. were it otherwise, and could a demand be raised against him by the arbitrary turn of the jailer's key, what civilized country, in this enlightened age, permits the sale of the person of the debtor to satisfy the rapacity of the Creditor? None!

Is a free citizen, then, because his colour happens to be dark, to be less protected by the laws than a poor debtor in the fangs of a merciless creditor? Is he to be deprived of the privilege of visiting your Capital, but some tip-staff should plunge him into a dungeon, to speculate on his liberties, or to bind him to the car of strangers? Would not, Sir, such a system equally place in jeopardy the privileges of the East Indian, and of the citizens of nations in amity with this, as the poor, sun-stricken, outcasts of Africa?

Shall we longer suffer this unconstitutional, this disgraceful offspring of a policy long since repudiated by the enlightened and honorable State of Maryland, to cling, as an excrescence on the code of this District?

The jurisprudence of this District, said Mr. W. ought to be exhibited to this country and to the world without a stain—its object should be, not to oppress, but to vindicate the rights of freemen, and if there is a spot on earth, where those rights should be held sacred, that place is the District of Columbia.

Mr. W. concluded, by hoping that the House would adopt the resolution, and that it will at an early day, command the serious attention of the Committee.

Mr. Forsyth said, he listened with some attention, to the remarks of the gentleman from New York, (Mr. Ward.) No law was obligatory which was contrary to the Constitution. Then, if this is the case, and the law which the gentleman speaks of exists, and this law is contrary to the laws of the United States, it is not obligatory. Then, why make any inquiry about the matters?

The Laws of the United States, says the gentleman from New York, are in direct opposition to this law: then it is an unconstitutional law, and can have no effect. The Laws of the Constitution bind every court. They equally affect Maryland and New York. The Executive of every State are obliged to act in accordance with these Laws. Then, why this inquiry? If the Laws of Maryland and any other State are contrary to the Laws of the United States, they do not bind any one, and they are not to be observed. Then, why bring this matter before this House? Why bring it into this Hall irritating and useless discussions? But, said Mr. F. most extraordinary doctrines seem to prevail, not only in this House, but also in the United States. Here it seems that the constituted authorities of one State, are called on to protect a man who is in another State. What has any Governor to do with the member of another State? What right has one Executive to interfere with the Executive of another? The rights of each member are clear, these rights are secured by the Law. The Constitution is the lex scripta. This is the protection of every individual. The Committee to whom is referred in the President's Message, the re-examination of the Criminal Code of the District of Columbia, should, if any rights are invaded by the Law, consider it. It is a proper subject, thought Mr. F. for their consideration: If any law operates on any one hard they will observe it. No injustice ought to be done to any, of any kind or colour. He hoped that the House would not suffer itself to be vexed and harassed by an inquiry into the principles of slavery, a subject which would produce the most serious effects.

Mr. Hamilton arose, and addressed the Chair—but the Speaker arrested the debate, the time having already expired, which is appropriated to the consideration of resolutions.

Wednesday, December 27.
The resolution of Mr. Ward, yesterday under consideration, was again taken up.

Mr. Hamilton of South Carolina, in rising to address the Chair, said, that he did not know that the House or himself had any occasion to regret that he should have failed yesterday in the effort he made to obtain the floor, on the discussion of the resolution of the gentleman from New York, (Mr. Ward,) for he confessed he was then under an excitement from the purely gratuitous, uncalculated, and inflammatory remarks of that gentleman, which, perhaps, at an unseasonable stage of the inquiry, might have impelled him into that sort of discussion, which the carefully premeditated flights of the gentleman's oratory were well calculated to provoke.

He was now, however, not disposed to oppose the passage of the resolution, because if there had been any oppression to an individual, contrary to law, let it be exposed; and moreover, if the question involved in the resolution was to be discussed, he would much prefer, (as it would be more appropriate,) offering what he had to say on the point, after the report of the Committee, to which it was proposed to send the resolution, should they discover the evil of which the gentleman complained, or adopt his views as to its remedy.

With this determination, he would not stop to expose the fallacy of that part of the gentleman's speech, which he presumed, was technically to be considered its argumentative portion, nor would he waste the time of the House by indulging in a critical analysis of the rhetorical part of his discourse, because he presumed that all the poetry and philanthropy of this was expressly for the edification and entertainment of the representatives of the twelve slaveholding States & Territories of this Union. He would not, therefore, be ungrateful to that gentleman for what, perhaps, was intended as the compliments of the season, and would assure him that whenever he was desirous of gratifying them with the pathos of a certain ballad entitled, "The sunstricken outcasts of Africa," that he might save himself an infinity of trouble, as he would, without doubt, find to his hands in the Della Crusca Album of some boarding school Miss, much prettier verses than these. But, Sir, let this pass, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof."

Whenever the Committee of the District of Columbia report, said Mr. Hamilton, on the resolution of the Honourable gentleman, he would not only again pay his respects to his poetry and prose, but, as a matter of curious speculation, if not of practical utility, make a special application of some part of his philanthropic oratory, even to the great State which the gentleman had the honour to represent on that floor.

Mr. Dorsey, of Maryland, said, that he arose to present a short history of the law as regards slaves. Soon after the settlement of the colonies, a law existed, that all persons of colour going at large, were carried to the magistracy, and if no evidence of their freedom appeared, they were arrested, and they had to pay the equivalent of the expense of the arrestment.

In 1791, a law was passed, they were arrested, and if no evidence of freedom appeared, they were sold. In 1791 the law prescribed the mode of notice by the Sheriff, and they were sold. In 1805, Judge Scott, of Baltimore, judged that no coloured person should be apprehended, unless proof existed of his being a runaway. This created much interest. The Legislature passed in 1810, a law which decreed that they should be apprehended without positive proof of their being runaways. In 1817, the Legislature resolved that the Sheriff should carry all such persons to the Judge, on proof, they were free—he li-

berated them, but if not, he remanded them to prison. This he owed to his State to say. He did not see any excitement necessary.

Mr. Powell said, that the matter prolonged might excite feeling, but he should not oppose it. As one of the committee, he should vote for it, as one he should exert his power in finding out any thing necessary. He hoped that the debate would here close, and the resolution pass.

Mr. Brent was sorry, that he could not agree with the gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Powell,) in voting for this resolution in its present state. He had no objections to an inquiry, but it must be under an amendment. He, therefore, moved to strike out the words "being a citizen of any of the United States," to which Mr. Ward agreed.

Mr. McDuffie said, he had to disagree with the gentleman from Louisiana, (Mr. Brent) and thought that resolution now, was far more exceptionable than before. Mr. McDuffie was willing to extend to N. Y. and to every other State, an equal portion of rights. Every privilege that others exercise she should have also. He hoped that the matter would be referred to a Committee from principles of obvious justice. While defending his own rights, he would ever be willing to grant the same to others. He hoped no excitement would be made. The term slavery, was not to create unfriendly feelings whenever it was presented. If New York wished to have blacks considered her citizens, let her have them. He wished her to have her privileges, as fair and full as any other State.

Mr. Brent said, that the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. McDuffie) could not agree with him; for this he was sorry, but his amendment, which was already accepted, was one of a necessary kind. What was the complaint in the case which was to be redressed by the resolution now before the House? It was the very class that his amendment comprehended. It was a freeman sold for fees. This was the case his amendment involved.

Mr. Forsyth, of Georgia, said, that there was, in regard to this case, a radical defect in the Constitution of the U. S. By the laws of N. Y. blacks are citizens. We have a right, in our part to say whether these shall be citizens or not. He had no objection to an inquiry. If the argument of the original mover of the resolution was good, then it was useless to have a committee; but if it is constitutional, then it should be altered. Mr. F. concluded, by saying, in that case, he would cheerfully enter into the inquiry.

Mr. Floyd, of Va. said that he was sorry that this subject had excited so much debate. If there is a law in this District to imprison a free white man, justice calls loud for its abolition. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Mifflin) mentioned many instances of a lamentable kind. Mr. F. had known many as lamentable. The gentleman from Ohio, (Mr. Woods) mentioned something about a powder magazine and much other like stuff, but Mr. F. asked if there was any powder magazine in this place? We are all interested in this matter. The States each have a right to take care of their rights. He hoped if there was such a law it would be repealed.

The resolution was then adopted.

A COUNTING-HOUSE CALENDAR,

FOR THE
YEAR OF OUR LORD
1827.

MOON'S PHASES.	Sun's Rising and Setting for every Saturday.						
	S.	R.	S.	S.	S.	S.	S.
January—31 days— First 3 4 2 A Full 13 1 0 M Last 29 11 43 M New 27 4 42 M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
February—28 days— First 3 4 2 A Full 11 5 19 A Last 18 8 6 A New 25 5 10 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
March—31 days— First 5 1 23 A Full 13 7 5 M Last 29 3 18 M New 27 6 53 M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
April—30 days— First 4 9 21 M Full 11 6 19 A Last 18 10 15 M New 23 9 51 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
May—31 days— First 3 4 21 M Full 11 3 21 M Last 17 5 53 A New 25 1 36 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
June—30 days— First 3 3 49 A Full 9 10 46 M Last 16 9 23 M New 24 5 0 M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
July—31 days— First 2 2 4 M Full 8 5 26 A Last 15 3 31 A New 23 7 40 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
August—31 days— Full 7 4 36 M Last 14 6 44 M New 23 9 27 M First 29 4 17 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
September—30 days— Full 5 9 32 M Last 13 0 40 M New 20 10 27 A First 27 10 10 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
October—31 days— Full 4 9 15 A Last 12 8 13 A New 20 10 42 M First 27 4 44 M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
November—30 days— Full 3 0 10 A Last 11 3 55 A New 18 10 15 A First 25 1 14 A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
December—31 days— Full 2 5 46 M Last 11 10 20 M New 18 9 1 M First 25 0 45 M	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

MOVABLE FEASTS.
Septuagesima, February 11.
Quinquagesima, February 23.
Ash Wednesday, February 28.
Mid-Lent, March 21.
Palm Sunday, April 8.
Easter Day, April 15.
Low Sunday, April 22.
Rogation Sunday, May 20.
Ascension Day, May 24.
Whit Sunday, June 3.
Trinity Sunday, June 10.
Advent Sunday, December 2.