

Annual
message

work. The State is without the means of raising the money for that purpose, and it would appear to be a desperate experiment to send a new set of bonds into the European markets.

I have received two letters from the Governor of Virginia, with a copy of the proceedings of the Legislature of that State, in relation to the refusal of the Governor of New York to deliver up certain fugitives from justice. These communications relate to a subject of deep interest to the people of Maryland, and are intended to call the attention of the slave-holding States to the necessity of some concert of action, if New York or other States should unfortunately persist in disregarding their constitutional rights. In giving to this subject the serious consideration to which it is entitled, you will no doubt perceive the advantage of postponing legislative action upon it, till the decision of the Supreme Court shall have been given in the case of Nathan Parris & others. It will be recalled, that this case involves nearly every question that can arise respecting the Constitutional rights of slaveholders, and the validity of such State laws as have the effect of obstructing the exercise of those rights. The Southern States are indebted to the justice and liberality of Pennsylvania for an opportunity of bringing these questions to a decision in the Supreme Court. Mr Meredith and Mr Nelson who have been employed as Counsel to represent this State, have informed me that the case is now ready for trial; and there is very little doubt, that it will be brought to a termination, before the adjournment of the Legislature.

I consider it my duty to call your attention to an ordinance of the City of Baltimore, which is odious and oppressive to a numerous and meritorious class of our citizens. I mean the ordinance approved the 13th of last March, and entitled, "a further supplement to an ordinance to preserve the navigation & harbor of Baltimore."

Under the provisions of this ordinance, duties are levied, under the title of wharfage on all articles, landed on the public wharves, from on board any vessels lying at said wharves, or placed thereon for the purpose of shipment or exposure for sale. Goods or produce delivered from vessels at the public wharves, or taken on board, are taxed with wharfage "to be paid by the owner or consignee," or in the event of their being none, by the master of the vessel. If the articles are not landed on the wharves, but are merely transferred from one vessel to another, the wharfage is half price. I have been informed, that the same kind of wharfage is collected by the owners of private wharves, and that no vessel can escape from it.

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