

boy, alleged to have been kidnapped, was the child of Mr Mitchell's fugitive slave. On the contrary, he is described to be free. Upon the indictment, therefore, the verdict and sentence would appear to stand justified. You will perceive, from the preceding remarks, that, however anxious I might be to comply with the request of the Convention, I nevertheless would have no means, at my command, to accomplish the ends proposed. In deference to their wishes, I instructed the Attorney General to proceed, at an early day, to the City of Philadelphia; and, there, to examine into, and report to me the facts of the case, with his advice as to the most judicious course to be pursued. He has promptly and efficiently discharged the duty assigned him. It appears that the case is beyond the reach of all existing legal remedies. The Legislature of Pennsylvania, alone, can lay the foundation for their proceedings. That Honorable Body can, and, I will respectfully add, should pass a law, authorizing a new trial, and a special verdict. Such a verdict, embodying the real facts, which govern the case, would disclose the true issue, on an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States, and, thereby, elicit a final adjudication of a constitutional question, in which Maryland, to a greater degree than all other States, is profoundly interested. With us, these issues are practical; whereas, with the South generally, they are matters of abstract principle. We are the actual sufferers; whilst most of the Southern States are merely participants in the discussion. Pennsylvania owes it to Maryland, in courtesy and justice, to afford an opportunity for the settlement of this question. If the Supreme Court of the United States shall determine that the decisions of the Courts of Pennsylvania are consistent with the Federal Constitution, the hardship may be endured. But, it cannot be borne with, upon the naked assumptions of the Judiciary of any one State.

On the 11th day of September last, Mr Edward Gorsuch, a highly respectable citizen of Baltimore County, accompanied by several friends and relatives, and a Deputy Marshal of the United States, went into the County of Lancaster, in the State of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of re-capturing four fugitive slaves, under the process, provided by the act of Congress, commonly known as the Fugitive Slave Law. Information had been, it appears, previously communicated to the people of that neighborhood, of the approach and intentions of the Marshall and his party. Shortly after their arrival, they were surrounded by armed bands of negroes, (numbering about one hundred and fifty,) who had been called together by a preconcerted signal. Three white Abolitionists were present, giving open countenance and encouragement to the mob. Finding that it was useless to attempt an arrest of the fugitives, the Marshal was already in the act of retreating, and had called upon his companions to follow him, when, with fierce yells and execrations, the infuriated rebels made an onslaught upon their peaceable and unresisting victims. Mr Edward Gorsuch, the aged and venerable father, was killed, and his dead body was brutally insulted; whilst the son was left upon the field, as dead. When the news of this atrocious butchery, and rebellion against the laws of the land, reached Maryland, the people, and especially the community of which Mr Gorsuch was a cherished member, manifested a great and very natural degree of excitement. Private letters, and the resolutions of public meetings poured in upon me, calling for my Executive interposition with the Federal Authorities. My duty would have been apparent, in the absence of any appeal. I immediately addressed to the President of the United States such a communication, as the magnitude of the occasion seemed to demand. His Excellency, through the Department of State, took an early opportunity to assure me of his deep abhorrence of the crime committed, and of his determination to exert the energies of the law to bring the offenders to justice, and to