

you will determine at an early day whether or not it is such a case as comes within the meaning of the Constitution, and that you will act accordingly).

Swann as you are doubtless aware is charged with the murder of William C. Sprigg and as his connections are very respectable and wealthy, and as they are making such preparations by the employment of distinguished and able counsel, in unusual numbers, as shows that they are going to use all their extensive influence, to secure an acquittal, the friends of the deceased and the community generally, manifest a great deal of interest in the result, and appear anxious that justice shall be done and the supremacy of the law maintained.

I understand that there are already six Counsel employed for the defence, among whom are Mr. Beane, Mr. W. Price, and Ex-Gov. Francis Thomas. I think it is the most important case that has ever occurred in the County, and if any case of the kind would justify the employment of additional Counsel to assist the State this one certainly does.

Mr. May of Baltimore, was written to by the friends of Sprigg to see if he could be employed by them, but he said he would not engage as private Counsel, but if he was assigned by the Governor, he would serve. I mention this to you, not for the purpose of pointing out to you, the person to be selected, in case you should decide upon assigning Counsel to assist me in the trial, but merely to show you that they were not unwilling to incur the expence of employing counsel themselves if it could have been done. And, although the appointment of Mr. May would be very acceptable to me, and to the friends of the deceased, I prefer leaving the selection to you. I hope you will give me an early reply as our Court commences its session, on next Monday week. and I will remain yours,

Very respectfully &c

J. H. Gordon
State Attorney for
Alleghany County