

sudden change of that conviction produced by Executive action, would not of itself incline them to make arrangements during the Holidays for a general stampede as the only alternative method of effecting their freedom, and whether therefore it would not be better that the true operation of the Presidents proclamation should be gradually unfolded to them, as it necessarily would be in the course of a short time, rather than risk the result above suggested by any sudden disappointment of their expectations.

This view, I am satisfied, might be taken of it by slaveowners in other neighborhoods, and I would not therefore without some more general expression of public opinion from other parts of the State feel justified in making any publication on the subject, but prefer confining my action at present to your vicinity by the means above suggested.

There is another consideration which would seem to weigh against the propriety of a public proclamation on this subject. Persons abroad would be very apt to deduce from it conclusions entirely unwarranted by the facts: It would for instance, in all probability be said that the slaves in Maryland were upon the eve of a revolt, which had rendered it necessary for the Governor to interfere and if possible prevent it by a proclamation - and the discussion or remarks which it would in all probability provoke, might be calculated in some parts of the State to stimulate similar movements among the slaves which there is now no reason to apprehend -

I feel fully convinced therefore that it is inexpedient to proceed by any publication on this subject, whilst so far as the slaves of your neighborhood are concerned, the reading to them the letter I enclose will accomplish your object, and you can cause copies of it to be made and use it as suggested, if on reflection you think such a notification to them will be advisable.

Very Respectfully
Your obt. servt.

A. W. Bradford

State of Maryland
Executive Department

Annapolis December 17th 1862

A. C. Gibbs Esq.

Sir:

From the representations made to me yesterday by yourself and the other gentlemen of your neighborhood, I was surprised to learn that mistaken impressions exist among the slaves or some of them in your District concerning the effect of the Presidents Proclamation upon their condition. I repeat that I was surprised to hear that such misapprehensions