

state," which that state might deem of sufficient importance to authorise a demand, if the offender escaped to another state. The offended state being the judge of its own laws, and of the necessity and manner of enforcing them, another state, in the relation of New York to Virginia, should not examine "whether the accusation be true or false. It should presume on the justice of its neighbor, and not suffer any doubts on its part to impair an institution so well calculated to preserve harmony and good understanding between the states." Indeed, the inquiry would be contrary to the law of nations, on which the Executive of New York relies.

These are the views entertained by your committee of the obligations imposed by the constitution. But if the constitution be only a recognition of the law of nations, and was designed only to secure the application of its principles to the states of the union, your committee still are of opinion, that the surrender should be made. By the authority quoted it will appear that the rule in question admits of a qualified application, not noticed by the Executive of New York, and we might confidently submit the case on that authority, as fully sustaining the claim of Virginia. When we consider the character of this union, and the intimate connection between the states, and the deep concern they all have in the observance of law, and regard for the rights of property in each other; and finally, in view of the eminent importance that was attached to the institution of slavery at the foundation of the government, as shewn by the extract recited; the constant recognition in the states of our right of property in that population, and the tender solicitude ever exhibited upon this subject, your committee venture to suggest the assumption, that New York and Virginia are "states so closely connected by friendship and good neighborhood as to authorise and require this matter to be carried further" than the limits assigned to nations more widely separated by distance—more foreign in interest and sympathy, and to claim the application of the above qualification to the present controversy, as presenting a case of at least "ordinary transgression, the subject of civil prosecution either with a view to the recovery of damages, or the infliction of punishment."

Your committee deem it inexpedient to recommend any course of action to the state of Virginia, more especially as she does not indicate the character of the measures contemplated by herself. It is presumed, however, that all the states will