

stitution or policy. This actually showing that the consequences of the manumission of slaves have inadvertently drawn the Legislature into an expression of opinion as to the effects of that policy. It is in these words,—“Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Maryland, that after the passage of this act it shall be deemed a high offence against the supremacy of this State, for any person knowingly to circulate, or in any way knowingly assist in circulating among the *inhabitants* thereof any *pictorial representation* or any *pamphlet, newspaper, handbill, or other paper, printed or written* of any inflammatory character having a TENDENCY to create *discontent* among, and stir up to insurrection the people of color of this State, and that every person that shall be duly convicted of this offence shall be guilty of a felony, and shall be sentenced to undergo a confinement in the Penitentiary of this State, for a period of time not less than ten nor more than twenty years from the time of sentence being pronounced on such offender,”—1835.

This act presents a singular position of the Legislature itself. It punishes any individual with confinement in the Penitentiary, “who shall by *pictorial representation* or by *newspapers*” or otherwise, create discontent among the colored population, and yet this same Legislature tolerate the actual presence of the free negro to produce these very consequences, which by the above act are punished as a felony. There is suspended against the walls of this House a pictorial representation of Washington receiving the articles of capitulation at Yorktown. The painting or pictorial representation conveys an idea of the deed performed, but if we were present to witness the scene how much more powerfully would it operate. Such is the result of the institution of the free negro. If any one should set up at the different public places in the State of Maryland, paintings or pictorial representations of such a character as to excite discontent, all would agree, he was within the provisions of the act, and yet this very Legislature tolerates the actual existence of the free negro himself, to produce this very discontent—for surely the negro—the natural, acting, present, person or representation is stronger than any pictorial representation could be. Thus if a pictorial representation of a free negro in a state of idleness and entire freedom in the State of Pennsylvania should be exhibited to the slave, would it not have the direct effect to produce discontent, and yet we have seventy thousand free negroes in the midst of our slaves in such a state of idleness and absolute freedom, and in full view of the slave, while the latter is engaged in his daily labor. Here then we might truly say, that the clear meaning and intention of this act shows what has already been said, that the presence of the free negro is doing a manifest injury to the slave-holder, by working out and inciting a constant discontent.

There is yet another act which is equally as strong in the maintainance of the position assumed on this subject. It is the act of eighteen hundred and thirty-one by which the Colonization