

dered it, as to the people of Maryland generally, if not, indeed, also, to that great public who were believed to be looking to the results of the labors of this Committee from far beyond the limits of our State. And, as is not unusual in such cases, the sense of disappointment might vent itself in reproaches more or less harsh towards those who were or should appear to be its authors, either by omission or commission, the undersigned could not but feel the desire to protect both themselves and their honorable colleagues from all such reproaches.

This duty of early and prompt action appeared to the undersigned to be still more imperative, when they remembered that it had been one, at least, of the avowed objects in raising the Committee, to relieve the majority of the members of the House from what they seemed to consider and treated as aspersions cast upon or insinuated against their fair fame, a thing too precious always to be lightly assailed, but most especially so to gentlemen holding the high and responsible position of Representatives of a free people in their legislative halls. This minority, therefore, in their just anxiety to proceed, and determine on their part to avoid all unnecessary delay, took occasion as early as the 19th of January to address a note to the Honorable Chairman, (the Committee not yet having been organized or convened,) furnishing that honorable gentleman with a list of the names of persons who, it was believed, could give testimony material to the investigations, and whom it was desired by that note should be summoned for examination.

No notice was taken of that note then, nor since, except the acknowledgment of its receipt before the Committee at their first meeting, which was not called until the 31st day of January, and a refusal on the part of the majority at that meeting to issue the summonses as asked for. One of this minority had, meantime, finding there was so much delay in the convocation of the Committee, asked of the House, by an order to that effect, offered on the 31st day of January, authority to the Clerk of the House, at the request of any two members of the Committee, to summon witnesses to appear before the Committee, to give testimony, which order was opposed and rejected by the House, the members composing the majority of the Committee voting against it. Hence, it appears, if there was delay in the proceedings and a failure to summon witnesses before the Committee, this minority were faultless, at least in those particulars.

At this first meeting of the Committee, held on the 31st of January, as before stated, the Chairman laid before the