

Mr. Mercer, from the committee, delivers to the speaker the following report :

THE committee to whom were referred the petitions of sundry inhabitants of Kent, Queen-Anne's, Talbot, Caroline and Dorchester counties, praying that a law may pass prohibiting the transportation of slaves out of this state, having given the same that serious consideration which the importance of the subject merits, submit the following report : They consider the property acquired in slaves by the citizens of Maryland, under the faith of laws existing before the revolution, and sanctioned by express compact on the dissolution of the old, and adoption of the new, government, as resting on the general basis of property, secured by society to its individual members, under limitations, one of the most essential of which is, that where the rights of the individual are to be resumed by the public for the general advantage, a reasonable compensation should be made. They presumed not to meddle with abstract questions on natural right, or to deny the legislative competency to meet any great and general regulation of civil policy, which the uncertain events attending every social institution, (particularly one so circumstanced as our own,) may at any time hereafter render indispensable ; but as they are not aware of the propriety or necessity of such at present, they cannot consent generally to prohibit that use of their property, which the necessities of owners may render indispensable, necessities that must continually arise under the obligations of those laws which contemplate the legality and value of that species of property ; nor do they believe that the transportation of the blacks to a warmer climate, more congenial to their physical constitution, is either inhuman as it respects themselves, or impolitic as it regards the state ; they consider the gradual diminution of the number of those persons, so distinguished by nature from the rest of the community, and a proportional supply in their place, by the substitution of white yeomanry, as an object highly desirable, and worthy of promotion.

They are also impressed, that the security and quiet of our constituents, and even motives of humanity to the slaves, impose on this legislature the imperative duty of discountenancing all representations to this body, which inculcate or admit an idea of apprehension to be entertained from this unfortunate race, who were found to be wholly insignificant, even during the revolution, when the union and the power of the United States were feeble, and when powerful hostile foreign armies, aided by domestic enemies, afforded means and temptation that cannot, in the nature of things, recur ; and to repress, with severity, all public discourses tending to encourage a spirit that may eventuate, in the first instance, in partial and momentary outrages, calamitous perhaps to a few citizens, but which ultimately must terminate in the ruin of the hopes, and aggravation of all the disadvantages, to which this race are now exposed.

But your committee, impressed as they are with these considerations, cannot for a moment doubt that the right of property in slaves, as exercised in this state, is, and ought to be, a limited right,—limited by the laws of humanity and Christianity. The legislature are bound to repress the vices of cruelty and inhumanity, and to encourage the virtues of philanthropy, benevolence and Christian charity ; and whilst they would refuse to prohibit generally the sale and transportation of slaves to the southern states, they are willing so far to restrain the same, as to prevent the violation of those ties of nature which even savage man respects, and which civilised society should protect with a religious reverence ; they therefore submit the following resolution :

RESOLVED, That a law should pass, prohibiting, under sufficient penalties, the sale of any slave or slaves for the purpose of transporting him, her or them, out of this state, and from transporting the same, whereby an acknowledged husband or wife, according to the customary relations that obtain among slaves, may be separated from each other, or whereby a mother may be separated from her child or children under — years of age, unless it be in consequence of the commission of some crime or offence.

By order,

J. S. BETTON, clk.

Which was read.

The bill to lay out and open a road from the town of Westminster, in Frederick county, to the city of Washington, was read the second time, and the question put, That the said bill do pass? The yeas and nays being required, appeared as follow :

A F F I R M A T I V E.

Messieurs	Neale,	Estep,	Edmondson,	Miller,	Hawkins,	Clarke,	T. Davis,
	Hebb,	Stuart,	Dashiell,	Marbury,	Nelson,	Douglas,	Veatch,
	Angier,	Chapman,	Holbrook,	Lowrey,	Kemp,	Smith, of Balt.	Cresap,
	Parker,	M <sup>r</sup> Pherson,	Steele,	Furnell,	E. Davis,	Smith, of Wash.	Cresap, of Mich.
	Chambers,	Jones,	Sheredine,	Shriver,	Montgomery,	Magruder,	Gebhart.
	Carcaud,	Hyland,					37.

N E G A T I V E.

Messrs.	Harwood,	Parran,	Love,	Johnson,	Bond,	Orrelli,	Cromwell,
	Mercer,	Lemmon,	Denny,	Thompson,	Mason,	Geoghegan,	Simkins.
	Dorsey,	Stanbury,	Quynn,	Street,			18.

So it was resolved in the affirmative.

Sent to the senate by the clerk.

On the second reading of the supplement to the act for the relief of sundry insolvent debtors, the question was put, That the clauses imposing a tax of five dollars on each insolvent debtor, to be paid to the register, and by him paid over to the treasurer as other taxes, which shall be paid by the treasurer to the chancellor in addition to his salary, be struck out of the said bill? The yeas and nays being required, appeared as follow :