

confident you will at once perceive. With these general remarks, permit us to call your attention to two cases of a very aggravated character. In the latter end of the year 1820 or 1821, a certain Samuel G. Griffith, as one that went with his overseer to a village, Tenet Square, in search of a slave who sometime before had made his escape from him. He was, we understand, fully able to identify the slave, and had the inhabitants of the village given him the aid he as a citizen of the United States had a right to expect, he would have had little or no difficulty in securing his property. But unfortunately, the inhabitants of the village, governed by misguided philanthropy, instead of assisting, gave him all the trouble they had it in their power to give. The consequence was, a determination on his part to take his slave, and in attempting to do so, himself and his overseer lost their lives. This caused in our state much public excitement; our citizens demanded legislative interference. They saw in this case, particularly those of them who live near the borders of Pennsylvania, the strongest inducement to their slaves to escape. They discovered in it also a motive to insurrection, if escape could not be effected in any other way. Those feelings of attachment, which ought to bind the citizens of the United States to each other, appeared to them to be violated. In a word they viewed Pennsylvania more as a hostile than a sister state. The other case we beg leave respectfully to mention to you, happened the last summer. One of the undersigned, Mr. Chauncey, who is now a delegate from Harford county, attempted to recover, near the village of Darby in your state, a slave belonging to a neighbor of his, who had run off some short time before; in this, as in the preceding instance, if no opposition had been made by the Pennsylvanians, the recovery of this property would have been accomplished with little difficulty. Mr. Chauncey knew the slave perfectly well, and was ready and willing to identify him in the way required by the laws of your state, the inhabitants of the place, however, threw in his way every possible obstacle. Mr. Chauncey requested that the slave might be kept in safe custody for two days, to give him an opportunity of returning to Harford, and bringing every possible proof that could be demanded; but this was refused him. This slave was forcibly released, and Mr. Chauncey threatened with imprisonment, and this too in the presence of many people of colour. It was stated too, by the inhabitants, before the negroes were dispersed, and in their hearing, that a negro had a right to put to death every one who might attempt to arrest him. Besides these two cases, many others happen every day. We are well advised, that the slaves of our citizens go off in numbers to your state, and that they are rarely recovered, and when they are, not without considerable trouble. This has now become to us a most alarming evil, and requiring immediate remedy, unless one be offered, that desirable harmony that should subsist between us, is not to be expected, and our respective citizens will, on the contrary, feel towards each other every thing but friendship. Permit us also to suggest, that the wisest policy of your state, independent of the considerations we have before stated, requires you to prohibit, in every proper way, the settlement of people of colour in your state.

It would seem to us, in the nature of things, impossible that such a population can be amalgamated with the whites, however liberal we may feel towards them, they cannot be permitted every enjoyment of every political privilege; in some measure they must be a distinct portion of the community. If we are not misinformed, your state already feels the burthen of this population; it seldom happens that they are not extremely dissolute and idle, and consequent nuisances to the public; we mention this with all possible respect, without wishing to interfere in the slightest degree, with the policy of your state, except when such policy may interfere with the rights of our citizens. But we do most earnestly, in the name of the legislature of Maryland, solicit the enactment of such legal provisions by you, as may protect our citizens in the peaceable possession of their slaves. This has now become a matter of serious moment to them, and one calculated to produce the most distressing irritation between two states. Should you deem it necessary to answer this letter, you can do so by addressing us at this place. It will give us much pleasure to give you any information on the subject of the communication, that you may desire. We have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, your most obedient servants,

R. JOHNSON, JNO. CHAUNCEY,
W. MILLER, L. J. DENNIS,
A. LEE,

*To the President of the Senate, and
Speaker of the House of Representatives, Pennsylvania.*

SENATE CHAMBER, Harrisburg, Feb. 1823.

Gentlemen—Your communication respecting the protection given by some of the citizens of this state to slaves who have absconded from their owners in the State of Maryland, has been read in the senate, which together with a message from his excellency the governor of your state, enclosing a resolution of the legislature passed on the 21st of February last, has been referred to the undersigned, who have been appointed a committee to take the same into consideration. The resolution to which we refer, was not taken up at the last session, in consequence of the late period at which it was presented, and the press of business which it was necessary at that time to dispose of; this we presume will be a sufficient apology for what might otherwise be considered a neglect of the former legislature in not attending to that communication.

We regret that any circumstance should have occurred which is calculated to create discord or uneasiness between the citizens of the two states, & as it is our duty, so it will be our sincere disposition, to endeavour to bring this subject to such a conclusion, as shall be calculated to promote that good will, and cordial harmony, which ought, and which we hope may always prevail between two states, whose citizens belong to the same common family, and whose mutual interests and welfare are so intimately connected.