

of the general Assembly of the former state upon the subject of the existing war with Mexico declaring: "That if any territory shall hereafter be acquired by the United States or annexed thereto, the act by which such territory is acquired or annexed, whatever such act may be, should contain an unalterable fundamental article or provision, whereby slavery shall be forever excluded from the territory acquired or annexed." Whilst the source from which these resolutions have emanated entitles them to a respectful consideration, the subject and character of the latter resolutions will claim your particular attention.

The constitution of the United States secures to the citizens of any territory, belonging to the United States, the right to have that territory admitted as one of the United States, with such republican form of government as they may choose to adopt, or may deem most conducive to their happiness, and no State has the constitutional right to interfere with, or restrict the rights thus secured to the citizens of such territory; nor have the Congress of the United States the constitutional power to prescribe whether slavery shall or shall not exist within the limits of such new States, it being exclusively the right of the citizens of such territory to decide that, and all such questions for themselves.

Whilst I admit that every State has a right to declare, whether territory, conquered by the United States, shall be held by or annexed to the United States, as a part of the territory thereof, I deny the right of any State or of the United States, to prescribe for such territory, if acquired, any conditions not recognized by the constitution as incident to the other territories of the United States. My respect for the State from which it emanated will not permit me to speak of the injustice of ~~the~~ resolve, by which the citizens of the Slave States would be excluded with their property, from territory, which, if annexed, will have been acquired by conquest, achieved by the blood and treasure of the whole Union.

I wish, gentlemen, that I could close this communication without adverting to a subject, which it gives me great pain to be obliged to bring to your attention. The course pursued by the authorities & citizens of Pennsylvania towards the Executive and citizens of this State, upon the subject of fugitive slaves, clearly demonstrates the inadequacy of existing constitutional and legal provisions to protect our citizens, in the enjoyment of their rights over this portion of their property. The first section of the Act of 1838, Chapter 63, declares that the escape of a slave from this State into any other State is