

Pam 1304

[N.]

MR. HAMBLETON,
FROM THE COMMITTEE ON COLOURED POPULATION.

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE

ON THE

COLOURED POPULATION,

“TO WHICH WAS REFERRED

AN ORDER OF THE HOUSE,

DIRECTING THEM TO ENQUIRE INTO THE EXPEDIENCY OF
FORCING ALL THE FREE PEOPLE OF COLOUR TO LEAVE
THIS STATE, WITHIN A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME.”

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES,
March 17th, 1836.

Read the first time and ordered to lie on the table.
By order, GEO. G. BREWER, CLK.

ANNAPOLIS:
JEREMIAH HUGHES, PRINTER.

1836.

REPORT.

The Committee upon the Coloured Population, to which was referred an order of this House, directing them to enquire into the expediency "of forcing all the Free People of Colour to leave this State within a certain period of time," has had the same under consideration, and beg leave respectfully to

REPORT,

That however much every well wisher of Maryland may desire to see her rid of this at present vicious and degraded population, yet, your committee do not think, that in the accomplishment of this desirable end, the enlightened Legislature of the State are prepared to steel their hearts against every consideration of justice and of right. The State has already, in almost every call, made emigration to Liberia, a condition precedent of obtaining freedom on the part of a slave—thereby ensuring the removal from her limits, of a large portion of this population. She has also provided a liberal fund to carry out her praiseworthy design, in removing such as accept freedom on the terms of the act, and such as are already free and willing to emigrate. Thus far her course has been high and just—such as every son of her's may contemplate with feelings of pride and approbation. Your committee need not suggest to you, that after granting the legislation prayed for by this order, and upon every blessing and advantage following in its train, that the most sanguine Marylander could conceive of, possibly in the midst of it, a returning sense of right, which we are told cannot always be stifled, might remind us that all these glorious results were dearly purchased at the expense of State faith and equal justice. Then indeed, might some

malignant foe of our institutions, point his finger to your Declaration of Independence, and in bitter mockery exclaim, it was unmeaning parchment—and touching you in a yet more tender point, ask you to interpret the clause of your Bill of Rights, which says, “that no freeman ought to be taken or imprisoned, or dissiezed of his freehold, liberties or privileges, or outlawed, or exiled, or in any manner destroyed or deprived of his life, liberty or property, but by the judgment of his Peers, or the law of the land.”

Your Committee need not also remind you that they imagine that patriotism to be rather selfish, which looks to the immediate benefit of sectional limits only. And suggest to you, that the more elevated feeling is that which looks to the country, and the whole country in its views and actions—carrying out this view, suppose the disgorgement of black population, here prayed for, to take place—immediately they remove to States, more friendly to them and more hostile to the institutions of domestic slavery, and open places of refuge and resort for absconding slaves from your limits, or leaguings with fanatic abolitionists and their aid, for the accomplishment of their diabolical and fiend-like operations. For remember that upon the passage of such a law as your committee are required to consider, removal to free non-slaveholding States is the inevitable result. Emigration to Liberia, to meet the crisis in such event, being worse than chimerical.

Believing then that justice cries aloud against the proposed legislation; that the principles of your organic law, and the genius and spirit of freedom revolt at it—that even that forecast which looks beyond the limited horizon of utter selfishness does not point to such a course, your committee feel constrained to say that such legislation ought not, and they trust will not be granted.

All which is respectfully submitted by
SAMUEL HAMBLETON.