

124
tion of Slaveholders recently held at Annapolis: that they cannot without doing violence to their feelings forbear to remonstrate against the passage on the part of the State Legislature of Laws which they believe to be at variance with every principle of humanity & of Justice.

That your memorialists do not apprehend that the Spirit and intention of many of the proposed enactments are at all in accordance either with the Christian or moral tone of the public mind in Maryland and they cannot but believe that the Session and reflecting of all classes must condemn them as harsh and oppressive - and they are persuaded this is the sentiment of not a few of the slaveholders themselves.

That while your memorialists as a religious Society have maintained a faithful testimony against Slavery for more than 50 years deeming it to be inconsistent with the Spirit and precepts of the Gospel, their members have been earnestly exhorted not to unite themselves with any of the popular associations of the day under the character of Abolitionists believing as they do that the true warrant for them to labour in this momentous concern is to be found only in religious

125
convictions of duty. Under this feeling your memorialists now appear before you to plead the cause of the oppressed and to entreat you not to gratify the wishes of one portion of the community by doing violence to the moral sense and feeling of a still larger number of their fellow citizens.

The injustice and cruelty of expatriating a large class of unoffending individuals by oppressive enactments and penalties need not be pressed upon the Legislature as being wholly incompatible with the provisions of the Bill of Rights of our State as well as with the Spirit of the Christian Religion which breathes "peace on earth & good will to men".

That the principles of Justice more than of supposed expediency and of right more than of might may govern your deliberations is our earnest desire believing as we do that the true interests of a country are best subserved by doing justly and loving mercy.

Your memorialists therefore earnestly and respectfully request that no laws prohibiting manumission or inflicting additional pains and penalties upon the free coloured population of this State may be passed by your body. Signed on behalf of the Representatives aforesaid.

Then adjourned.