

To the General Assembly of Maryland now in Session.

The Memorial of the undersigned Citizens of Queen Ann's County respectfully represents that they have understood with deep concern, that a bill has been reported in the House of Delegates of this State to deprive persons conscientiously scrupulous in holding slaves for life, from emancipating them by manumission, last will and testament or otherwise, unless they shall convey them, or cause them to be conveyed out of this State, thereby in effect prohibiting emancipation almost entirely; for it must be known to your Honourable Body, that other States have laws preventing the emigration of these people into their borders, and that the neighboring States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey & Delaware, are making regulations to counteract the effort of Maryland to discharge these unhappy people and to throw them upon <sup>her</sup> sister States. Your Memorialists object first to the passage of the proposed bill; because it is intended to prohibit the free and full exercise of conscience in a matter of vital importance.

There are very many of your constituents, who believe that slavery is in direct violation of the express commandments of God, and that its perpetuation is not only calculated to draw down the just judgments of the Almighty upon the nation, but to overwhelm the individual concerned in it with personal and eternal ruin. Impressed as they are with these sentiments, they think it cruel and oppressive, that a condition should be required of them by the Legislature, which it would often be impossible to comply with; or if at all practicable, would in many instances beggar themselves and their families in its accomplishment. It may seem of but little importance to those who have been educated to think, and whose subsequent reflections have confirmed the prejudices of education that it is right to hold, under the circumstances in which we are placed, a part of God's intelligent creatures in perpetual vassalage, because power, circumstances and the enmity of our ancestors, have thrown them into their possession; but to ones deeply conscious of the purity and impartiality of Jehovah, and of his hatred to injustice and oppression, it is a matter of anxious solicitude, that they should be permitted the right of judging in matters involving such momentous and eternal consequences. Your Memorialists further object to the passage of the proposed law, because it imposes conditions upon the slaves manumitted to be free hereafter, which they cannot comply with under existing circumstances, and therefore will operate upon them so as to cut them off from the boon intended them by their humane and conscientious masters, and to make them perpetual slaves without designating