Abolitionists, and by Mr. Dickinson in his letter to me: "*Homo sum et nihil humanum a me alienum puto,*" as translated and practically illustrated by them. Such a doctrine would give wide authority to every one, for the most dangerous intermeddling with the affairs of others. It will do in poetry—perhaps in some sorts of philosophy—but the attempt to make it a household maxim, and introduce it into the daily walks of life, has caused many an "Homo" a broken crown; and probably will continue to do it. Still, though a slaveholder, I freely acknowledge my obligations as a man; and that I am bound to treat humanely the fellow creatures whom God has entrusted to my charge. I feel therefore somewhat sensitive under the accusation of cruelty, and disposed to defend myself and fellow slaveholders against it.—It is certainly the interest of all, and I am convinced that it is also the desire of every one of us, to treat our slaves with proper kindness. It is necessary to our deriving the greatest amount of profit from them. Of this we are satisfied. And you snatch from us the only consolation we Americans could derive from the opprobrious imputation of being wholly devoted to making money, which your disinterested and gold-despising countrymen delight to cast upon us, when you nevertheless declare that we are ready to sacrifice it for the pleasure of being inhuman. You remember that Mr. Pitt could never get over the idea that self-interest would insure kind treatment to slaves, until you told him your woful stories of the middle passage. Mr. Pitt was right in the first instance, and erred, under your tuition, in not perceiving the difference between a temporary and permanent ownership of them. Slaveholders are no more perfect than other men. They have passions.—Some of them, as you may suppose, do not at all times restrain them. Neither do husbands, parents, and friends. And in each of these relations, as serious sufferings as frequently arise from uncontrolled passions as ever does in that of master and slave, and with as little chance of indemnity. Yet you would not on that account break them up. I have no hesitation in saying that our slaveholders are as kind masters, as men usually are kind husbands, parents, and friends—as a general rule, kinder. A bad master—he who overworks his slaves, provides ill for them, or treats them with undue severity—loses the esteem and respect of his fellow citizens to as great an extent as he would for the violation of any of his social and most of his moral obligations. What the most perfect plan of management would be, is a problem hard to solve. From the commencement of slavery in this country, this subject has occupied the minds of all slaveholders, as mush as the improvement of the general condition of mankind has those of the most ardent philanthropists; and the greatest progressive amelioration of the system has been effected. You yourself acknowledge that in the early part of your career you were exceedingly anxious for the *immediate* abolition of the slave trade, least those engaged in it should so mitigate its evils as to destroy the force of your arguments and facts. The improvement you then *dreaded* has gone on steadily here, and would doubtless have taken place in the slave trade but for the measures adopted to suppress it.

Of late years we have been not only annoyed, but generally greatly embarrassed in this matter, by the Abolitionists. We have been compelled to curtail some privileges; we have been debarred from granting new ones. In the face of discussion, which aims at loosening all ties between master and slave, we have in some measure to abandon our efforts to attach them to us and control them through their affections and pride. We have to rely more and more on the power of fear. We must in all our intercourse with them assert and maintain strict mastery, and impress it on them that they are slaves. This is painful to us, and certainly no present advantage to them. But it is the direct consequence of the abolition agitation. We are determined to continue masters, and to do so we have to draw the rein tighter and tighter day by day to be assured that we keep them in complete check. How far this process will go on, depends wholly and solely on the Abolitionists. When they desist we can relax. We may not before. I do not by all this mean to say that we are in a state of actual alarm and fear of our slaves; but under existing circumstances we should be ineffably stupid not to increase our vigilance and strengthen our hands. You see some of the fruits of your labors. I speak freely and candidly—not as a colonist who, tho' a slaveholder, has a master; but as a free white man, holding under God, and resolved to hold, my fate in my own hands; and I assure you that my sentiments, and feelings, and determinations are those of every slaveholder in this country.

The research and ingenuity of the abolitionists, aided by the invention of runaway slaves—in which faculty, so far as improvising falsehood goes, the African race is without rival—have succeeded in shocking the world with a small number of pretended instances of our barbarity. The only wonder is that, considering the extent of our country, the variety of our population, its fluctuating character, and the publicity of all our transactions, the number of cases collected is so small. It speaks well for us. Yet of these, many are false, all highly calored, some occurring half a century, most of them many years ago; and no doubt a large proportion of them perpetrated by foreigners. With a few rare exceptions, the emigrant Scotch and English are the worst masters among us, and next to them our northern fellow-citizens.—Slaveholders born and bred here are always more humane to slaves, and those who have grown up to large inheritance of them, the most so of any—showing clearly that the effect of the system is to foster kindly feelings. I do not mean so much to impute innate inhumanity to foreigners, as to show that they come here with false notions of the treatment usual and necessary for slaves, and that newly-acquired power here, as every where else, is apt to be abused. I cannot enter into a detailed examination of the cases stated by the abolitionists. It would be disgusting and of little avail. I know nothing of them. I have seen nothing like them, though born and bred here, and have rarely heard of any thing at all to be compared with them. Permit me to say that I think most of *your* facts must have been drawn from the West Indies, where undoubtedly slaves were treated much more harshly than with us. This was owing to a variety of causes, which might, if necessary, be stated. One was, that they had at first to deal more extensively with barbarians fresh from the wilds of Africa; another, and a leading one, the absenteeism of proprietors. Agents are always more unfeeling than owners, whether placed over West India or American slaves, or Irish tenantry. We feel this evil greatly even here. You describe the use of *thumb screws* as one mode of punishment among us. I doubt if a thumb screw can be found in America. I never saw or heard of one in this country. Stocks are rarely used by private individuals, and confinement still more seldom, tho' both are common punishments for whites all over the world. I think they should be more frequently resorted to with slaves, as substitutes for flogging, which I consider the most injurious and least efficacious mode of punishing them for serious offences. It is not degrading, and unless excessive occasions little pain. You may be a little astonished, after all the flourishes that have been made about "cart whips," &c., when I say that flogging is not the most degrading punishment in the world. It may be so to a white man in most countries, but how is it to the white boy? That necessary coadjutor to the school-master the "birch" is never thought to have rendered infamous the unfortunate victim of pedagogue ire; nor did Solomon in his wisdom dream that he was counseling parents to debase their offspring, when he exhorted them not to spoil the child by sparing the rod. Pardon me for recurring to the now exploded ethics of the Bible. Custom, which you will perhaps agree, makes most things in this world good or evil, has removed all infamy from the punishment of the lash to the slave. Your blood boils at the recital of stripes inflicted on a man; and you think you should be frenzied to see your own child flogged. Yet see how completely this is ideal, arising from the fashions of society. You doubtless submitted to the rod yourself, in other years, when the smart was perhaps as severe as it would be now; and you have never been guilty of the folly of revenging yourself on the preceptor who in the plenitude of his "irresponsible power" thought proper to chastise your son. So it is with the negro, and the negro father.

As to chains and irons, they are rarely used; never I believe except in cases of running away. You must admit that if we pretend to own slaves they must not be permitted to abscond whenever they see fit; and that if nothing else will prevent it these means must be resorted to. See the inhumanity necessarily arising from slavery, you will exclaim. Are such restraints imposed on no other class of people giving no more offence? Look to your army and navy. If your seamen, impressed from their peaceful occupations, and your soldiers, recruited at the gin shops—both of them as much kidnapped as the most unsuspecting victim of the slave trade, and doomed to a far more wretched fate—if these men manifest a propensity to desert, the heaviest manacles are their mildest punishment. It is most commonly death, after summary trial. But armies and navies you say are indispensable, and must be kept up at every sacrifice. I answer that they are no more indispensable than slavery is to us—and to *you;* for you have enough of it in your country, though the form and name differ from ours. Depend upon it that many things, and in regard to our slaves most things which appear revolting at a distance, and to slight reflection would, on a nearer view and impartial comparison with the customs and conduct of the rest of mankind, strike you in a very different light. Remember that on our estates we dispense with the whole machinery of public police and public courts of justice. Thus we try, decide, and execute the sentences, in thousands of cases, which in other countries would go into the courts. Hence most of the acts of our alleged cruelty, which have any foundation in truth. Whether our patriarchal mode of administering justice is less humane than the assizes can only be determined by careful inquiry and comparison. But this is never done by the abolitionists. All our punishments are the outrages of "irresponsible power." If a man steals a pig in England he is transported—torn from wife, children, parents, and sent to the Antipodes, infamous, and an outcast forever, though perhaps he took from the superabundance of his neighbor to save the lives of his famishing little ones. If one of our well-fed negroes, merely for the sake of fresh meat, steals a pig, he gets perhaps forty stripes. If one of your cottagers breaks into another's house, he is hung for burglary. If a slave does the same here, a few lashes, or perhaps a few hours in the stocks, settles the matter. Are our courts or yours the most humane? If slavery were not in question you would doubtless say ours is mistaken lenity. Perhaps it often is; and slaves too slightly dealt with sometimes grow daring. Occasionally, though rarely, and almost always in consequence of excessive indulgence, an individual rebels. This is the highest crime he can commit. It is treason. It strikes at the root of our whole system. His life is justly forfeited, though it is never intentionally taken, unless after trial in our public courts. Sometimes, however, in capturing, or in self-defence, he is unfortunately killed. A legal investigation always follows. But, terminate as it may, the abolitionists raise a hue and cry, and another 'shocking case' is held up to the indignation of the world by tender-hearted male and female philanthropists, who would have thought all right, had the master's throat been cut, and would have triumphed in it.

MESSRS. EDITORS: I have read with great pleasure the enclosed editorial, taken from the Annapolis Republican. You will confer on me a favor by publishing it in your paper. Many errors are in circulation in reference to the cost of our Judiciary, and I desire the people of Charles county to know the real cost and the means of supporting it. The argument contained in the article in reference to the salary of the Governor, conclusively shows that a reduction of it during the term for which the present incumbent was elected, would be against good morals and the Constitution.

A SUBSCRIBER.

Port Tobacco, August 26, 1845.

REFORM.

We have heretofore adverted to this subject, which is now being agitated through the State, with the sole view of disabusing the public mind of the errors into which the unfounded publications of the so-called Reformers are calculated to lead it. We have shown that the entire cost of the Judicial Department of the government is $36,648 37.

We have shown that the amount paid into the treasury, derived from the judiciary, is $23,825.71, making the actual expense of our judiciary only $12,722.96 instead of $41,000, as is stated by the Reformers.

We now propose to consider the clamors which are raised by the *Reformers* against the Executive Department of the Government.

They say that the power of appointment to office should be taken from the Executive; that the salaries of the Governor and Secretary of State are too high; and that the Senate of Maryland committed a great error in rejecting a bill, which passed the House of Delegates at the last session, reducing the salaries of those officers to one-half the amount to which, under the existing law, they are entitled.

Before we proceed to the argument of this question, we would ask those *wise* and *disinterested friends* of the *people*, who *now* desire to uproot the fundamental law of the State, what new light has come over the spirit of their dreams? Whence cometh this new-born zeal for the interest of the people? By what new principle in political economy have they, for the first time since the adoption of the present Constitution in 1837, discovered that the salaries of the Governor and Secretary of State are too high, and that a State Convention is necessary to reduce them? By what principle of ratiocination have they been enabled to discover in 1845, that the power of appointment by the Executive of Judges, Clerks, Registers, &c., is a "*Kingly prerogative,*" which is dangerous to the liberties of the people, and which should therefore be abolished? Was not the salary of Governor Grason, and his Secretary of State, from 1838 to 1841, and of Governor Thomas, and his Secretary of State, from 1841 to 1845, the same which is now received by the present Governor and Secretary of State? Did not the Convention vest in Governors Grason and Thomas the same "*Kingly power,*" of appointing Judges, Clerks, &c., which is exercised by the present Governor? Did not the modern Democracy (*the now reformers,*) during the Gubernatorial canvass of last year, claim for their party the exclusive merit of having formed the present *reformed* constitution, and charge the Whig candidate for Governor with opposition to the present constitution?

Was the question of Reform of the present Constitution (by the reduction of the salary of the Governor, or in any other particular,) agitated before the people in any part of the State?

If Mr. Carroll had been elected Governor instead of the Whig candidate, would the Locofocos have made this discovery that his salary was too high, or that the power of appointment should be taken from him?—Would they not have denounced any attempt to legislate Governors Grason or Thomas from the office to which they were elected by the people (by taking from them the salary to which under the Constitution and the law they were entitled for the entire period for which they were elected,) an infringement of the Constitution and violation of the compact between the people and the officer elected by them? No; if Mr. Carroll had been elected the Governor of the State, the recent discoveries of defects in the organic law would never have been made; an attempt to reduce his salary would have been a violation of the Constitution, and the exercise of the "*Kingly power*" of appointment would have been entirely democratic.

The response which must be given by every honest mind to each of the interrogatories above propounded, clearly demonstrates that the political ascendency of their party in the State is *the reform* which they really aim at. That the present Constitution and Form of Government is *democratic* enough for them, provided it is administered by a Grason, a Thomas, a Carroll, or by any other of their own party; and that it only becomes aristocratic and requires *reform* when their party is deprived of its administration. During the entire period since the formation of the present Constitution, *the modern Democracy*, having the assendency in the State government, adopted, in reference *to reform*, the maxim of Lord Eldon, "*sat cito, si sat bene;*" and no proposition whatever was made, either before the people or in the Legislature, to alter the present Constitution; but now (fortunately for the honor and credit of Maryland,) the Whigs having gained for the first time the ascendency, they (the modern Democrats) have reversed their maxim, and now "*sat bene si sat cito*" is their doctrine. Now, (although the necessity of further reform was not mentioned before the people in the canvass of 1844, and certainly would not have been now agitated if Mr. Carroll had been elected,) the Locofocos from Allegany to Worcester have again mounted this political hobby, and hope by depriving the present Governor of the salary to which by his election he is entitled, to legislate him from office, and again possess themselves of the Executive branch of the government.

We have digressed from the object of this editorial. We propose to show that the Legislature have no right to lessen the salary of the Governor *during the period for which he has been elected*, and that the Whig Senate of Maryland were consequently compelled by their oaths to reject the bill of the last session which had for its object the reduction of his salary.

By the amended Constitution it is declared, "that an election shall be held for a Governor of this State, *whose term of office* shall commence on the first Monday of January next ensuing the day of such election, *and continue for three years*, and until the election and qualification of a successor."

The salary of the Governor is fixed by the act 1837, chapter 131. This act is entitled, "*A supplement* to the act to *fix and make permanent* the salaries of certain officers of the civil government," and is a supplement to the act of 1805, chap. 86, which is "an act to establish permanent salaries for the Judges of the six judicial districts in this State."

The act of 1804, chap. 55, which established the present judicial system, is (like the Constitution of the State in reference to the salary of Governor,) silent in reference to the amount of compensation of the Judges, but it provides "that the salaries of the said Judges shall not be diminished during the *period of their continuance in office.*" Do not the Legislature, by the very title of the act of 1837, chap. 131, making it a supplement to the act of 1805, chap. 86, clearly manifest their intention to place the salary of the Governor upon the same footing with the salary of the Judges? But this intention is made clear beyond all controversy by the language of the act of 1837, chap. 131.—This act declares (in reference to the salary of the Governor,) "that the Governor hereafter to be elected shall be entitled to receive at the rate of the following annual salary in current money, *whilst he continues in office,*" and the Constitution says "that the Governor shall be elected by the people, and that his *term* of office shall commence on the 1st Monday in January next after his election *and continue in office for three years, &c.*"

The law gives the Governor a certain salary *whilst* he *continues in office*, and the Constitution fixes *the period of his continuance in office to three years.* Under the *law and the Constitution*, therefore, he becomes entitled to receive the prescribed salary for *the period* he is *to continue in office.* By the act above referred to, of 1804, chap. 55, the Judges are to continue in office until turned out in the manner prescribed by that act, and their salaries cannot be diminished during their continuance in office; and by the act of 1805, chap. 86, the amount of their salaries is fixed. The Constitution, in reference to the Governor, performs the office of the act of 1805 in regard to the Judges—it fixes his term of service to *three years*; and the act of 1837, chap. 131, performs the office in reference to the salary of the Governor, which is performed by the acts of 1804 and 1805 in regard to the salaries of the Judges—it declares that *during his continuance in office* he shall receive an annual salary of $4.200.

Again: is it not clear that the election of a Governor by the people constitutes a contract under the Constitution and the act of 1837, between the people and the person elected, by which the person elected is entitled to the prescribed salary? And if so, would not the repeal of the law of 1837, which declares that the Governor shall receive during his continuance in office $4,200 per annum, violate that clause of the Constitution of the United States which says that no State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts?

Looking, therefore, to the power of the Legislature to pass the bill of the last session proposing to lessen the salary to which the Governor is entitled, it is manifest that the Whig Senate were bound, by their oath to support the Constitution, to reject that bill.

The conclusion to which we come, *that the Legislature has no rightful power to lessen the salary of a Governor elected by the People during the period for which he has been elected*, is not only supported by the liberal construction of the Constitution and the act of 1837, but is (as we now propose to show,) essential to the pure administration of the Government.

By the old Constitution the Governor was elected *annually* by the *Legislature*, and because of this dependence of the Executive upon the Legislative will, the wise framers of that instrument, thought it essential to the independent exercise of the Executive power of appointment to office, that members of the Legislature should be made constitutionally ineligible to office during the period for which they were elected.

By the amended Constitution the election of the Governor of the State was transferred from the Legislature to the People, and (under the supposition of the framers of that instrument that the Executive was relieved from its dependence upon the Legislative branch of the Government,) members of the Legislature were made eligible to office. Now, it is manifest that the Executive is placed immediately under the control of the Legislative branch of the government if you clothe the latter with the power at pleasure to take away the salary which under the constitution and the act of 1837, is assigned to the former. It is certain that the Legislature of 1827, which passed the amended constitution and the act of 1837, (to be construed *in para materia* with it,) when they declared that the Governor should receive a certain fixed salary *during his continuance in office*, never designed that the salary of that officer should be held at the mere pleasure of a subsequent Legislature.

There is another view of this question, which, in our opinion, places the correctness of the conclusion to which we have arrived beyond all doubt.

The amended Constitution certainly *designed* to transfer the election of Governor from the *Legislature to the People*, and that the Governor elected by the People should exercise the executive functions for the term of three years. It was certainly not designed that the person to be selected by the people should discharge the important duties of the station assigned him without pay; on the contrary, it was expressly provided that the person to be selected by the people should receive annually whilst he continued in office a *certain* salary.

When the present Governor was elected, a majority of the legal voters of Maryland who cast their votes for him, did not *alone* impose upon him the obligation to discharge the *duties* of the office of Governor, they also conferred the right to receive, during the period for which they elected him, the *salary attached to that office.* A different construction to the one for which we contend would place it in the power of the Legislature to annul the election made by the People, and to assume to themselves (what the Constitution designed to take from them,) the appointment of the Governor of the State whenever for *party* or *other purposes* they might desire to throw out of office the person selected by the People.

Under a different construction to ours the process would be a very simple one. A majority of the people elect a Governor—the person selected by the people is, for party or other reasons, obnoxious to a majority of both branches of the Legislature; all they would have to do to defeat the will of the people, and secure to themselves the appointment, would be to pass a law repealing the act of 1837; by which the Governor elected by the People would be deprived of the means of living, and consequently of the ability to occupy the station assigned him by the people of the State. It certainly was not the design to make property a qualification for this office. On the contrary, the increased salary allowed by the amended Constitution was designed to enable those who were not possessed of property to compete for this high distinction before the people. If therefore the people should at any time elect to this office a person of small estate, (and we believe they have heretofore only elected such,) the exercise of this power by the Legislature would force such person (upon