COMMUNICATION.

For the Port Tobacco Times.

Mr. Editor: I ask a column in your paper to give a brief notice to the letter of R. T. Merrick, Esq., which, owing to circumstances unnecessary to detail, has just met my eye.

In stating my objections to his resolutions, I merely exercised an undoubted right—a right guaranteed by the organic law, as essential to free representative government. It is always the privilege and often the duty of the citizen to animadvert upon the public acts of public men, and it would sound strange, in our day, to hear this right called in question. It is matter of choice and somewhat of taste, whether this shall be done over an assumed signature or one's proper name. Usage is in favor of the former mode, and it might look like vanity or egotism to depart from it. The able and spirited appeals of Thomas Paine to the American Colonists, urging resistance to British usurpation, and ultimately, independence of British control, were written over the signature of "Common Sense." The immortal exposition and defence of the Federal Constitution bears the unpretending signature of "Publius." If Madison, Hamilton and Jay judged it wise to respect and observe this general practice, it would be "overstepping the modesty of nature" for an humble individual like myself, unknown to fame, to offend against it. A sound argument needs not the adventitious help of a great name; one feeble and founded on error cannot borrow strength or the power of conviction from a name, however illustrious. Such were the considerations, which induced me to assume a signature, designating my condition rather than my person.

The next enquiry is, was the publication signed, "A Slave-holder," wanting "in justice and information, *as to the course*" of our Delegate in this particular instance.—The specifications, which follow this passage, leave the reader in no doubt as to the ground on which the imputation of *ignorance* is made to rest, but it is not so clear what is relied on to support that of *injustice*. It is better to be ignorant than unjust; and I therefore lament that I do not see so clearly the point to which my defence against this latter and graver accusation is to be directed. Surely a mere difference of opinion as to the legal construction and effect of his resolution relating to the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia did not properly make me obnoxious to such a charge. I had said that this resolution "rested our resistance to the abolition movement on the District of Columbia *solely* on the deed of cession of Maryland, and thus abandoned the high constitutional ground occupied by Southern statesmen on the subject." The only point of defence set forth in the resolution against this aggresssive measure, when directed against the District, was the obligation of good faith due to our State. This was all; no other ground was stated—none other even intimated. *Expressio unius est exclusio alterius*—the specification of one is the exclusion of all othere. I ask, is this not the fair, the common sense interpretation—the uniform legal construction. To ascertain the legal operation and effect of the resolution, I had no other guides but the established rules of construction. In applying them in this case, I never dreamed I was doing the gentleman an injustice, or narrowing his resolution within its legitimate scope. Mr. Clay assumed the same ground in his resolution on the subject, and conceded that it surrendered the constitutional power and stood only on the good faith of the Federal government. I feel that I may here rest my vindication against the charge of injustice, either by thought, word, or deed.

I think I have as complete a defence against the imputation of ignorance or want of information. I knew the fact, (as my piece shows) that the House had constituted a Committee on Federal Relations, and I knew enough of parliamentary law to know that its jurisdiction would embrace every subject of conflict between the Federal and State Government. I had read the Governor's message, in which the attention of the Legislature had been drawn, in a spirit of earnestness and with all the force of language, not merely to the "Wilmot Proviso or *any similar scheme*," but to the "*resolutions* of the Legislature of the State of Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, Missouri, New Hampshire, and Vermont, in relation to slavery," and where he remarks "they will be found to present the *true issues* between the Northern and Southern sections of the Union upon that dangerous and threatening question." The Governor was right in coupling "any similar scheme" with the "Wilmot Proviso"—the latter is now dead, and the former is the living monster which has usurped its place, and whose roar fills the land with threatenings; and he was right in saying the resolutions referred to "presented the true issues." They embraced specifically "*any attempt on the part of Congress, to legislate on the subject* so as *to effect the institution of Slavery* in the States, *in the District of Columbia*, or in the Territories," as "a violation of the principle of compromise upon which the Constitution was founded." Such was the legislative voice of Missouri. Virginia enumerated, the issues *including that of the District*, with as carful a precision, as did, I believe, each and every State, whose resolutions were "transmitted" to the Legislature and referred by the House to its Committee on Federal Relations. It is apparent, then, that this very subject of Slavery *in the District of Columbia* was regularly before this Committee, *eo nomine*, as much so, as any other of the "issues," "between the Northern and Southern States of this Union."—It would seem, then, that Mr. Merrick was deficient "in information," when he supposed that nothing "had been said in the order," creating the Committee on Federal Relations "in reference to Slavery in the District of Columbia." *In placing the message and resolutions of the several States before this Committee for consideration and action, the House clearly committed to them all the subjects presented in those resolutions; than which none was more distinctly and specifically presented and designated than that on the District of Columbia.* Were it then (which I deny) a violation of parliamentary courtesy, or the privilege of the Committee, to have embraced the Wilmot Proviso or territorial question in his series of resolutions for the reason, that the subject was already committed, then it was quite as much so to move in reference to the District of Columbia, or, indeed, any possible phasis of the question of Federal interference with the institution of Slavery. This *whole* subject, *in all its bearings and aspects*, was presented by the *message and accompanying resolutions*, to the Legislature and by the House sent to the appropriate committee. But my knowledge of parliamentary law and experience in public affairs, however limited, have been ample enough to acquaint me with a few general principles, which are recognized in every legislative body in our country, as well as in the Parliament of Great Britain. First, that committees are but the creatures of the House originating them, and subject to its will and control: 2ndly, and as a corollary from the first, that it is competent and proper for any member of the House, *on leave being granted*, to submit any measure or proposition in the shape of a bill or resolution to the consideration of a committee having charge of the subject, and when necessary, accompanied by instructions to report in accordance with its principle: thus perhaps overruling its judgment and shaping its action. Yet I am to learn that such proceeding has even been regarded as a violation of parliamentary courtesy and propriety. I do not think that I need add more to relieve myself from the imputation of ignorance of parliamentary law, or of the true position of this question in the House of Delegates, when I wrote.

But the most extraordinary feature in this communication of Mr. Merrick is his giving a party character to the strictures I made on a paragraph quoted from the "Republic," and which I had carefully characterized as "a *Northern* scheme for cheating the South of all share in the recently acquired territories." That paragraph was doubtless indited by the Northern Editor (Mr. Sargeant) of that press, as all editorials favoring "Free Soil" are understood in Washington to proceed from that quarter. Be that as it may, I deny that either the Whig or Democratic party, as such, is obnoxious to the "harsh strictures" said to be so "uncharitably imposed upon one of the great parties of the country." They are applicable only to that *great* numerical party (agreeing in nothing else) which is seeking to build up the sectional ascendancy and dominion of the North upon the ruins of the Constitution and the degredation of the South. If the remarks made by "A Slave-holder" bore hard upon certain distinguished personages, who had once been recognized as leaders by the Whig party, they hit with equal force individuals once holding similar positions in the Democratic ranks. The gentleman does himself great injustice in claiming those I had named in connexion with the scheme of accomplishing the purpose and object of the Wilmot Proviso, by changing its mode of enactment, as "his party leaders." Party, in such a case, would, like "misery, make him acquainted with strange bed-fellows." He would find himself in company with the before-named functionaries consorting and cooperating with Martin Van Buren, Thomas H Benton, Wilmot, Preston King, Hale, and the whole host of free-soilers and anti-slavery extensionists: In a word, I much fear few of any party to the North will be found to have the moral never to resist this new and more insidious attack on the constitutional equality of the South. It is cheering to know that, in relation to this scheme, there is but little division at the South; Whigs and Democrats, forgetting old differences, are knit together as a band of brothers, resolved "to maintain and defend the Constitution," at all hazards, and thereby, if possible, to save the Union. It is in the ranks of these brave defenders of all that is just and honorable, that we must, at this crisis, look for our leaders. The gentleman is greatly mistaken, if he suppose I had any paltry interest of party expediency to promote by denouncing this "Northern scheme" and its authors and champions. The question is now agitating the Senate, and Mr. Merrick will soon see that old party lines are obliterated and that many, who once he might have proudly followed as his standard bearers, are now arrayed firmly against the just constitutional rights of his State; upon whose altar he has sworn his fealty and for whose honor, I doubt not, he would peril all he holds dear on earth. "*Una salus ambobus erit, commune periculum.*"

A SLAVE-HOLDER.

February 24th, 1850.

MARYLAND LEGISLATURE.

Annapolis, February 23, 1850.

In Senate.—The bill from the House to repeal all laws which prohibit the introduction of slaves into this State, was reported with an amendment, making it a fine of not more than $500 upon persons who may introduce slaves for sale beyond the limits of the State. An effort was made to give it a third reading, but was lost by a vote 12 to 8, it requiring two-thirds.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Carpinter submitted a resolution, requesting our Senators, &c. in Congress, to make efforts to effect a speedy settlement of the claims of our citizens for French spoliations.

The resolution to pay Geo. W. Goddard and James J. Hayden, of St. Mary's county $150 for arresting negro James Stewart, who was convicted of aiding in the escape of slaves, was taken up and rejected. It was afterwards reconsidered and passed. Yeas 38—Nays 11.

Supplement to provide for removal of Lunatic paupers from the several counties to the Maryland Hospital [to be paid for out of the school fund of the county from which the paupers may come] was taken up.

Mr. Lankford objected to taking the school fund for this purpose.

Mr. Gwinn stated that the counties were authorized to make a levy for this purpose, but they had heretofore, in some instances, neglected to do so, and the result was that the paupers were sent to the Hospital, and in many cases the county authorities refused to pay for them. This law would have a tendency to compel the counties to make the required levy, in order to supply the school fund.

Mr. Biser objected to touching the school fund, but stated, that he would vote for a bill compelling the counties to make a levy for the maintenance of their lunatic paupers.

On motion of Mr. Merrick, said bill was recommitted to the Judiciary Committee.

The House adjourned.

Febuary 25 1850.

In Senate.—Mr. Done made a favorable report on the House bill to elect clerks and registers immediately by the people. Laid over.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Marshall, of P. George's, Chairman of the Committee on Inspections, reported a bill to exempt from rent and storage all Maryland tobacco in the State warehouses in Baltimore.

Mr. Stake, Chairman of the Internal Improvement Committee, a supplement to provide for the completion of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal to Cumberland, &c. Made the order of the day for Friday next.

Mr. Carpinter, from the Committee on Ways and Means, a bill to limit the fees and emoluments of certain officers. Made the order of the day, for this day week.

The bill to alter and amend an act for the regulation of the village of Piscataway, in Prince George's co., and the Senate bill, to erect an additional election district in Prince George's county, were passed.

The supplement to the Sunday Law was next taken up.

On motion of Mr. Causin, said bill was amended so as to leave the decision of the question to the legal voters of the several election districts of the counties, &c.

Mr Marshall of Baltimore, and Mr. Brown moved so to amend as to submit it to the people at the next Gubernatorial election, instead of the first general election.

Mr. Stake moved as a substitute so to amend, as to refer it to the people for decision on the "second Wednesday of May next," which was agreed to.

Pending a motion of Mr. Causin, to submit it to the legal voters of Baltimore, as a whole, the House adjourned till 4 o'clock.

Evening Session.—The House met at 4 o'clock, and proceeded to the unfinished business of this morning, being a supplement to the Sunday law.

The amendment of Mr. Causin, to take the vote of Balumore city, as a whole, was agreed to.

Mr. Carpinter moved to strike out the word "Sunday," and insert "License," so as the vote of the people be taken on the continuance of the "License law," which, after debate, was rejected.

On motion of Mr. Stake, it was so amended as to dispense with the reqirement to vote on separate ballots.

Mr. Brown moved to add to the bill a section suspending the opperation of the original law, until the decision provided for shall be obtained.

He advocated his amendment, and Mr. Worthington spoke against it. Both these gentlemen went into the merits of the question.

The amondment of Mr. Brown was rejected.

Mr. Dixon moved an amendment, to apply the bill exclusively to Baltimore city. Rejected.

Mr. Thomas moved to except Cecil county, which was rejected.

Mr. Foard moved to strike out the enacting clause. Rejected—yeas, 26, nays 39.

Mr. Worthington moved to lay the bill on the table, which was also rejected—yeas 26, nays 39.

The question was then taken on the passage of the bill, and it was passed—yeas 42, nays 25.

Mr. Causin asked to be excused from voting. He was in favor of the bill from principle. He had no doubt of the ability of the Legislature to legislate on this subject, but he believed the submission of the question to the people to be unconstitutional.—He was excused.

February 26, 1850.

In Senate.—Mr. Constable reported a bill to require free negroes and mulattoes to perform certain labor in the counties therein named, which was passed.

The resolutions in relation to slavery, from the House were assented to.

The bill from the House, to repeal all laws prohibiting the introduction of slaves into this State, was passed as follows:

Yeas—Messrs. Gather, (Prest.) Blackistone, Bowling, Blocher, Cary, Clarke, Constable, George, Hambilton, Kent, McCullough, Sellman, Whaley.—13.

Nays—Messrs. Done, Keyser, Matthews, Moores, Naill, Phelps, Roberts.—7.

Mr. Hambilton submitted resolutions of thanks to Commodore Buchanan and Surgeon Pinkney, U. S. N., citizens of Maryland, for gallant and meritorious conduct in the Mexican war, which were unanimously assented to.

The Senate adjourned.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Causin submitted an order to meet at 10 and sit till three—meet again at 4 o'clock for the trans action of private or local business, which was adopted. Also, to receive no new matter for legislation after Wednesday next, unless otherwise ordered, which was also adopted.

Mr. Gwinn obtained leave to report a bill to regulate the marital rights as they affect the real estate of the wife.

On motion of Mr. Foard, the supplement to the Sunday law was reconsidered. He then moved to amend, so as to leave it to the decision of the people of the counties as a whole, instead of by districts.

The Speaker decided the motion out of order, as it was a motion to strike out an amendment made by the House.

Mr Foard then moved to reconsider the amendments, so as to attain the object, which was agreed to. Mr. Causin, who offered these amendments, then withdrew them.

Mr. Worthington moved to reconsider the amendment, providing for taking the sense of the people on this question, on the 2d Wednesday of May next, so as to leave it as originally reported, at the October election, which was not agreed to.

The bill was again passed—yeas 37, nays 25. Messrs. Causin and Merrick were excused from voting.

Mr. Worthington reported a bill to provide for the instruction of the indigent blind persons, inhabitants of this State. [It appropriates annually $2,000 for this purpose.]

The Speaker announced the order of the day, being the bill for the relief of Passmore McCullough, of Anne Arundel county.

[This bill sets forth in the preamble that there was awarded by arbitrators to be due Passmore McCullough (in consequence of his connection with the Annapolis and Elkridge Railroad Company,) the sum of $45,215 17. The bill then provides for the transfer to said McCollough of 519 shares of preferred capital stock in said Railroad Company, standing in the name of the State, in satisfaction of said award.]

The bill, as it progressed in its reading, had various amendments proposed to it, but one of which offered by Mr. Digges, to the preamble, was adopted. None of them affecting the object of the bill were agreed to.

Mr. Harris moved to strike out the enacting clause. Pending which motion the House adjourned till 4 o'clock.

Evening Session.—The resolution allow Mrs. Sarah Ann Watson the half pay proper of a Lt. Colonel, during her widowhood, to commence from the death of her husband, was amended so that the pay should not exceed $30 per month, and then passed—ayes 47, nays 20. Adjourned.

February 27, 1850.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Spence submitted a resolution, that the Librarian purchase copies of McSherry's History of Maryland. Laid over. Mr. Marshall, of Baltimore, a resolution that the Adjutant General furnish Capt. Traverse Callen, of Somerset county, with fifty muskets, for the purpose of enforcing the oyster laws of this State, which was passed.

Mr. Morgan, chairman of the committee on colored population, reported a bill relating to free persons of color.

Mr. Merrick from the Judiciary Committee, reported a supplement to provide for the removal of lunatic paupers from the several counties to the Maryland Hospital.

Mr. Morgan reported a bill to provide for taking new bonds from the collectors of State and County taxes in St. Mary's county, which was passed.

Mr. Gwinn submitted an order, that the Secretary of the Annapolis and Elkridge Rail Road Co. furnish the House with a copy of the testimony of Chancellor Johnson, and all other testimony in his possession, in regard to the claim of Passmore McCollough, before the arbitrator appointed under the act of 1841.

Mr. Digges moved to mend, so as to obtain all the testimony in the possession of said company, and also the testimony taken before the arbitrators under the act of 1846. The orders were debated by Messrs. Gwinn Causin, Farnandis, Kilgour, Digges, Merrick, Weems, Brown and Harris. The amendment of Mr. Digges was agreed to, and Mr. Gwinn withdrew his order.

The Speaker announced the order of the day—being the bill for the relief of Passmore McCullough, of Anne Arundel county. The question before the House being the motion of Mr. Harris, to strke out the enacting clause (*i. e.* reject the bill.)

Mr. Causin, who commenced his remarks yesterday, in opposition to the motion, continued and concluded. He was followed by Messrs. Gwinn, Weems, Harris and Dixon, in favor of the motion, without taking the vote, the House adjourned.

Evening Session.—Resolutions of thanks to Commander Franklin Buchanan and Surgeon Ninian Pinkney, U. S. N. were received from the Senate, read and assented to.

Mr. Bowie, from the Committee on Colored Population, reported favorable on Senate bill, to require free negroes and mulattoes to perform certain labor therein mentioned in the counties therein named, [requiring them to work two days in each year on public roads,] with amendments to make it a general law for the whole State: After some little discussion the bill on motion of Mr. Carpinter, was recommitted.

February 23, 1850.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Bonifant obtained leave to report a supplement, for the relief of insolvent debtors in certain cases. Also, to provide for the support and maintenance of debtors actually confined in prison. Said bill was subsequently reported and on motion of Mr. Stake, recommitted to Judiciary Committee, with instructions to inquire into the expediency of reporting a bill to abolish imprisonment for debt.

The resolution to provide for the compilation and printing of the several laws of this State was passed.

Mr. Farnandis, chairman of the committee on Ways and Means, reported a bill for the general valuation and assessment of property in this State. Made the order of the day for Monday next.

The Speaker announced the order of the day—being the bill for the relief of Passmore McCollough, of Anne Arundel county. The question before the House, being on the motion of Mr. Harris, to strike out the enacting clause.

After a call of the House, the vote was taken on said motion, and it was rejected—yeas 30, nays 41.

After the adoption of a number of amendments, and the rejection of others, the question was taken on the passage of the bill, and it was rejected—yeas 22, nays 51.

The House adjourned.

March 1, 1850.

In Senate.—Mr. Keyser submitted a resolution reinstating certain militia officers, whose places were vacated by resolution No. 84 of 1847, which was passed.

The bill from the House, supplementary to the Sunday law, was rejected.

House of Delegates.—Mr. Causin laid before the House a letter from B. U. Campbell, of Ellicot's Mills, proposing to superintend the preparation, (free of charge,) of a block of marble to be presented by this State to the Washington National Monument Society, from a quary near Sykesville, which was referred to the consideration of His Excellency, the Governor.

The bill to change the Constitution, &c. in regard to the appointment of the Clerk of the Court of Appeals, and Registers of Law office and Chancery, was taken up, [to be appointed by concurrent vote of the Legislature.] On motion of Mr. Kilgour, referred to the next General Assembly.

The Speaker announced the order of the day, being the bill relating to consignments of agricultural produce for sale to factors and other agents—passed.

The House adjourned.

Washington's Birthday at St. John's College at Frederick.—Washington's Birthday was celebrated at Frederick by the Tullipheboian Society of St. John's College. A correspondent of the Sun, in speaking of the institution and the celebration, says:

This literary institution has been chartered by the present Legislature of Maryland and numbers, we were informed, 138 students. It is a good omen of its future success that its existence, as a college, commences by celebrating the praises and revering the memory of the "father of his country." After the brilliant oration of Clark Koontz, the active and honorary members of the society were enlivened at dinner, with the soul-stirring eloquence of E. L. Lowe, and classic reminiscences of Col. Kimmel. The latest historian of Maryland also spoke with just pride, teeming with useful information of past glories and present honors of "the Banner State;" and the talented president of the college showed, by his ready rejoinders, that he was worthy of his station.

The Washington Union states that, during the past month of February, there were received at the mint of Philadelphia, three and a third tons of gold from California—making about two millions of dollars.

THE TIMES.

PORT TOBACCO, MD.

WEDNESDAY MORNING, MAR. 6, 1850.

Mr. Bell's Compromise Resolutions. The resolutions lately introduced into the U. S. Senate by Mr. Bell, of Tennessee, contemplate the formation of two additional slave States out of that portion of Texas lying south of 36 30 north latitude, one to be admitted as soon as the consent of Texas shall be obtained, and the other at a future period. They also propose to admit California into the Union at once, and to provide territorial governments for other territories.

The Sunday Law.—The Senate of Maryland on Friday rejected the bill recently passed by the House on this subject.

Pennsylvania Slave Laws.—A bill repealing the law of the 3d March, 1847, which forbade the officers of the State Government of Pennsylvania, from aiding in the capture of fugitive slaves, has been read in the Legislature of that State, and is almost certain to pass, it is said.

House of Delegates.—The Annapolis Republican says, the Maryland House of Delegates consists of 48 farmers, 14 lawyers, 2 doctors, 1 tavern-keeper, 1 shoemaker, 2 carpinters, 9 merchants, 1 surveyor, 1 school-master, 1 mill-wright, 1 lottery vender and 1 clerk.

For the Port Tobacco Times.

Annapolis, *March 2d*, 1850.

Mr. Wells: I now undertake the task of giving you, and through you, to the people of Charles county, a brief account of the doings of the Legislature of this great and good old State, a State which for patriotism and devotion can vie with any other. But I am sorry to say, that her people are not true to themselves: the spirit of *progressive Democracy* is abroad throughout the upper part of this State and in the city of Baltimore; and the judgment, the discretion, and patriotism of the fathers of our present *old Constitution* are all scattered to the four winds of heaven: *Progress* is the watch-word for *destruction*, *Democracy*, for *power*, and *Reform*, for *political capital*.

The Reform Bill is now the law of the land, and the people will be called on in May next to record their votes for or against a Convention, and if a majority be in favor of a Convention, an election for delegates will be held in September next. The Convention will meet in Annapolis next November to alter or abolish the old, or make an entire new constitution. What will be the result of its deliberations, time alone can develope. I suppose the Judiciary of the State will meet with *progressive* attention; and should a clause be inserted to elect the Judges by the people, the voters of our county will remember those who have heretofore sought their good will and support, and laughed at their credulity, when elevated to situations obtained by sycophancy and deception. The Clerks and Registers of Wills will also meet with due attention. Rotation in office is one of the *progressive doctrines* of the day; but, oh, how little practiced by those who profess it!

The bill relative to a new assessment of property in the State, was reported to the House on last Thursday and ordered to be printed, and made the order of the day for Monday next. When the bill is printed I will procure a copy and send it to you. I have not seen it and cannot give you any particulars; but I understand the assessment of slaves is to be uniform throughout the State, or as nearly so as circumstances will permit. The assessors will be appointed by the bill and named therein, and it is probable that the bill will contain a clause, that the assessment shall not be commenced until sometime next fall.

A number of bills of a local and private character have been acted upon. It is said that more business will be left undone this session than at any former one, and I believe it, for you must recollect that the Legislature are now legislating for two years. It is questionable whether biennial sessions are a saving to the State or not.

The Legislature is composed of very good material. As for sobriety, good conduct, and attention to business, I believe they have not had their superiors in any former session—that is the opinion of the citizens of this place, and it is my own as far as I have been able to judge.

It has been rather dull here this winter, but at times we have had some gaiety, such as balls, parties, concerts, &c., which have been generally well attended and patronised.

The Legislature will adjourn on the 10th of March next, being the time appointed in the Constitution, so that your representatives will soon be at home amongst their constituents, to give an account of their stewardship, which I hope may be satisfactory.

The bill repealing the laws to prevent the introduction of Slaves into the State has passed—so that any person may bring into this State Slaves for his own use, without paying tax thereon; but no slave convicted of crime can be brought in under a severe penalty.