

IMPORTATION OF AFRICANS.

MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

IN ANSWER TO

The resolution of the House of Representatives of January 22, requesting information relative to the importation of Africans into the State of Georgia, or any other State of this Union.

FEBRUARY 15, 1859.—Read, ordered to be laid on the table, and printed.

To the House of Representatives :

I transmit herewith a report from the Attorney General, in reply to the resolution of the House of Representatives adopted on the 22d ultimo, requesting the President of the United States to "report" "what information has been received by him, if any, in regard to the recent importation of Africans into the State of Georgia, or any other State of this Union ; and what steps have been taken to bring to trial and punishment the persons engaged in this inhuman violation of the laws of the United States, and to prevent similar violations hereafter."

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON CITY, *February 15, 1859.*

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE,
February 15, 1859.

SIR: Agreeably to the resolution of the House of Representatives passed on the 22d ultimo, inquiring what measures have been taken with reference to the Africans imported contrary to law into the State of Georgia, which resolution was referred by you to this office, I have the honor to report that the local officers of the government at Savannah have been strictly and specially enjoined to perform the duties imposed upon them by the several acts of Congress relating to this subject; that special counsel has been employed to aid the district attorney in prosecuting the offenders, and that the advices received at

this office satisfactorily show the diligence and activity of all persons engaged in the public service. To find the negroes who were clandestinely landed, to identify the parties engaged in the crime, and to ascertain other important facts connected with the transaction—all this has been attended with many difficulties, but there is good reason to hope that they will be overcome, and justice, according to the law of the land, executed upon the offenders. But the present condition of the affair is such as to make it absolutely impossible that the proceedings already instituted, or those in contemplation, should be given in detail without very great prejudice to the public interest.

Very respectfully, yours, &c.,

J. S. BLACK.

The PRESIDENT.