

17th CONGRESS.]

No. 506.

[1st Session.]

RECOVERY OF FUGITIVE SLAVES.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 17, 1821.

BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES, *February 7, 1821.*

Whereas the owners of slaves in this State are frequently subjected to great imposition and serious inconvenience, from the constant and ready protection afforded their runaway negroes by the citizens of Pennsylvania, it is deemed necessary to call the attention of Congress to the subject.

Whenever a runaway slave is pursued and found in Pennsylvania, every possible difficulty is thrown in the way, so as to prevent the recovery of such slave. There are persons always ready to lend every practicable aid in thwarting the just and legal efforts of the owner in the recovery of his negro. If the color of legal proceedings fail, force is not unfrequently resorted to. As the present acts of Congress are not sufficient to protect the rights of our citizens in relation to their negroes, and since the present state of things is not only vexatious to master, but extremely pernicious, and calculated to destroy the contentment and happiness of slaves, therefore,

Resolved by the General Assembly of Maryland, That it is the duty of the Congress of the United States to enact such a law as will prevent a continuance of the evils here complained of.

Resolved, That his excellency the Governor be requested to forward, immediately, copies hereof to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress, with a request that they will exert their influence in procuring the adoption of such measures as will effectually protect the right of slaveholders.

By order:

JOHN BREWER, *Clerk.*BY THE SENATE, *February 16, 1821.*

Read and assented to.

By order:

JOHN N. WATKINS, *Clerk.*

True copy of the original on file in the Executive Department of the State of Maryland:

NINIAN PINKNEY,
Clerk of the Council of Maryland.

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[1st Session.]

CITY OF WASHINGTON: VALUE OF PUBLIC LOTS.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, DECEMBER 26, 1821.

OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS,

WASHINGTON, *December 26, 1821.*

SIR:

In obedience to a resolution of the House of Representatives, passed the 21st instant, requiring a report of the amount of unimproved property in the city of Washington belonging to the United States, with an estimate of its probable cash value at this time, I have the honor to state:

That the public ground in this city consists of two descriptions: 1st. Building lots assigned to the United States upon a division with the original proprietors, agreeably to the terms and conditions of the deeds of trust for the ground within the limits of the city, by which the proprietors ceded to the United States one-half of the building lots, without any pecuniary equivalent. 2dly. "Reservations" of entire squares, or larger sections of ground, purchased from the original proprietors, on account of and for the use of the United States.

Of the building lots there remain unsold about the number of 5,150. The reservations contain, together, 541 acres 1 rood and 29 perches, or 23,584,745 square feet, equal to 4,479½ standard lots.

Any estimate of the cash value of this property must, under present circumstances, be extremely arbitrary. Owing to the general stagnation of business and scarcity of a circulating medium, few sales have been effected, either on public or private account, within the last year or two; and it is only from actual sales in the vicinity that the value of any given lot can be ascertained. The average price of the public lots heretofore sold is \$180 per lot, or about 3 $\frac{419}{1000}$ cents per square foot. Taking this as the rule of valuation, the whole of the ground belonging to the United States, in the city of Washington, would amount to one million seven hundred and thirty-three thousand three hundred and ten dollars.

I have the honor to be, with great respect, sir, your most obedient servant,

SAMUEL LANE, *Commissioner of Public Buildings.*Hon. PHILIP P. BARBOUR, *Speaker of the House of Representatives.*