

pendance for support, have deserted them, and held them at defiance. That as the Petitioners most ardently desire to put the House in possession of all the facts which belong to their case, they beg leave to inform the House that a Mr. *Frazer* of their district, obtained lately a warrant from three Justices of the Peace to commit to the House of correction his slave who had deserted his service, (and who was one of three, the only property he had saved from the ravages of the late war, and his chief dependance for support in his old age;) and that on a writ of *Habeas Corpus* being sued out, the slave was discharged by the Court of King's Bench, under an opinion that the property was not sufficiently proved by Mr. *Frazer*. The petitioners tho' they entertain a high opinion for the authority of that Honorable Court, cannot but remark that the evidence produced on that occasion was, in their apprehension, the best which it was possible in any case to produce, and that the Court in desiring more, have asked what it would be impossible almost ever to obtain, and in this manner have divested all the owners of slaves of any property in them.

That it was stated in the course of the judgment of the Court that the Act of the 37th of His present Majesty, C. 119 had repealed all the laws respecting slavery: but this statute in the humble opinion of the petitioners only goes the length to declare, that slaves shall not in future be assessed for the payment of debts due by their owners; it does not go so far as to divest such owners of their property in their slaves, nor can it be considered as tending to emancipate the slaves in His Majesty's plantations. That so far from this, subsequent Acts still further recognize slavery to exist, and encourage the importation of Negroes from the coast of *Africa*.

That the petitioners are extremely sorry to detain the House so long on this occasion, so interesting to them, as many of the petitioners have paid considerable sums for slaves who have deserted their service, and all of them are deeply sensible that this class of men who are now let loose on society, and live an idle and profligate life, may be tempted to commit crimes, which it is the duty of every citizen to endeavor to prevent.

That the petitioners under all the circumstances which they have taken