Mr Farlow from the joint committee on police, presented the following report and resolution, read a first and by special order a second time, adopted, and sent to the First Branch.

The joint committee on police, in pursuance of the resolution directing them to enquire into the share which any of the city officers may have taken in the alleged illegal arrest of a negro woman named Rebecca Garrett and her children, respectfully report that a petition for freedom in that case is now pending and undetermined, and that other proceedings, and those perhaps in the nature of a criminal prosecution, may arise out of it; and the tribunals of the country are yet to decide whether the conduct of the persons suggesting or contriving that arrest was an assertion of right, an error, or a crime. As the facts and their legal affect are not yet established by a verdict, the committee think it proper to refrain from speaking either in censure or acquital; they are unwilling to decide whether the claimants have merely sought to repossess themselves of the persons and services of fugitive slaves or acted irregularly but with a mistaken notion of their rights, or maliciously, or whether they were guilty of assault and false imprisonment, that being apparently the offence to which their acts can, at the worst amount, inasmuch as there is no evidence of any intent on their part to have the alleged slaves removed from Maryland. Any opinion which they could form with the limited means of enquiry in their power might be erroneous, and hereafter shown to be so by the decision of the courts of justice. The committee, however, have esteemed it their duty to search into the motives and proceedings of the officers of the Middle District watch house who are implicated in that arrest. The existance of guilt or misbehaviour on their part might probably be ascertained without determining its amount or consequences in law, and they might well have acted in violation of their duty and excess of their authority, whether the persons arrested be free or slave. It seemed also proper that if they be innocent they should be at once restored to the public confidence, and their characters purified from unjust suspicion; and that, if guilty, some measures should be taken to bring them to account, not only in the law courts, but before the corporation, whose servants they are; and that any further abuse of power should be prevented by their removal. The committee present the following result of their enquiries. They can find no fault with Captain Howell, the officer having charge of the watch house. The claimants came there and represented that they were desirous of arresting a runaway slave

named Serena Garrett, she had been in the watch house on a previous occasion, and had then admitted herself to be a slave. The captain despatched one of the lieutenants in pursuit of her, under the supposition that if he succeeded in arresting her, he would as usual bring his prisoner to the watch house, where the magistrate who attends in the morning might investigate the case and despose of it according to law. The lieutenant, however, instead of correctly performing his assigned duty, assumed the responsibility of delivering Serena Garrett at once to the claimants instead of carrying her to the watch house, and also suffered them to arrest in his presence and to carry away Rebecca Garrett, the mother, and the other children. The committee think that Captain Howell acted with propriety, and that he ought not to be charged with the error or irregular proceedings of his subordinate; and they absolve him from all blame without any hesitation, and not as an act of grace but of justice. With regard to the lieutenant making the arrest (who is no longer an officer under the corporation) they at once declare that his conduct was most improper and censurable; and they should have stated this opinion with perfect confidence in its correctness, had not the high authority of Baltimore county court made that confidence into certainty. The committee however think it but justice to that officer to say, that from the excellence of his character and the uniform correctness of his official conduct on all previous occasions, they have no doubt that he acted in perfect honesty and good faith although erroneously; and they have accordingly given him the benefit of this statement, although it can only be used in palliation and not as a defence of his behaviour on the occasion enquired of. They offer the following resolution:

Frederick Pinkney
A J Dushane
R C Wells
First Branch

Jno T Farlow
Joseph J Stewart
Second Branch

Resolved, that the committee be discharged from the further consideration of the subject.

On motion of Mr Taylor, the resolution of the joint committee on streets, in relation to tunnelling Centre street, was taken up, read a second time, concurred in and returned to the First Branch.

On motion of Mr Taylor, the resolution of the joint committee on streets, in relation to the tunnelling of Chatworth street, was taken up, read a second time, concurred in and returned to the First Branch.

A report and resolution of the joint committee on water-