

INTERESTING CORRESPONDENCE.

CAN NEGROES PREEMPT LANDS.

LETTER TO MR. MARCY.

NEW-YORK, Nov. 13, 1856.

HON. WM. L. MARCY, Secretary of State.

DEAR SIR: I am a citizen of the United States, of African descent, and am desirous to go to Minnesota Territory with a view to preempt and settle upon a quarter section of the Government land there.

Will you have the kindness to inform me if there is anything in the laws of the country or in the regulations of the Territory to interfere with this, my wish.

Respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

ISAIAH LAWRENCE.

ANSWER.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, Nov. 18, 1856.

SIR: Your letter to the 13th inst., to the Secretary of State, has been referred to this department, it having the supervision of matters connected with the public lands.

In reply thereto I have to state that there is nothing in the laws of the United States which would prevent you as a free man of African descent from settling upon public land in the Territory of Minnesota, and acquiring a right of preemption.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

R. McCLELLAND.

TO MR. ISAIAH LAWRENCE, New-York

LETTER TO MR. SECRETARY THOMPSON.

ST. PAUL, June 27, 1857.

HON. JACOB THOMPSON, Secretary of the Interior.

DEAR SIR: I addressed a letter of inquiry on the 13th of Nov., 1856, from my residence, at that time in the City of New-York, to the Hon. Secretary of State, stating my desire to settle upon and preempt a portion of the public domain.

The late Hon. Secretary of the Interior, R. McClelland, in reply thereto on the 18th of the same month said:

"I have to state that there is nothing in the laws of the United States which would prevent you as a free man of African descent, from settling upon public land in the Territory of Minnesota, and acquiring a right of preemption."

Upon this information I came to this Territory with a desire and intention of availing myself of the advantages of preemption here.

The Register of the Land office at Stillwater, has given an opinion adverse to my right of preemption. I hope you will write me confirming the decision of your honorable predecessor.

Respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

ISAIAH LAWRENCE.

To the last letter Mr. Secretary Thompson has not yet vouchsafed an answer.