

that good men hands are worth all that the government is offering to pay for them; even in that case I doubt the expediency of paying for them by the State, and for this reason. Our western men have sustained very heavy losses by this war—losses amounting to many millions of dollars. These people will contend, and very justly, that their losses and the losses of the slaveholder are in precisely the same predicament, viz: both are incidents to the war, and therefore if the State compensates for one, she is morally and religiously bound to compensate for the other.

And further, if we undertake to compensate the loyal slaveholder, we will soon have to compensate the disloyal also. It will be an easy matter for the disloyal a few years hence to come forward and prove by testimony, competent in law, that in 1864 they were loyal men—were opposed to the rebellion and never aided it by word or deed. Mr. Thomas P. Williams, of my county, who in the month of May, 1861, persuaded my boy-brother, George Enos Valliant, then a boy but 17 years old, to go down to Virginia and there defend his native South from the inroads of northern Goths and Vandals, and offered to pay the expenses of ten young men to go and do as he urged my brother to do, (and did other things too numerous to mention,) will be able to bring some one to swear that he, too, has ever been loyal, and thereupon base a claim for compensation, and thus the State will be obliged to compensate the loyal and the disloyal alike, and will also be obliged to compensate the sufferers to whom I have alluded in the western counties, (which latter our Legislature has already refused to do.) And in doing all this, we seriously threaten our State with bankruptcy.

Now, Mr. President, I have put on record some of my reasons for being in favor of emancipation and opposed to State compensation. But I have not stated all my political faith in regard to slavery. I am in favor of *immediate* emancipation. As I have already trespassed more largely than I intended upon the time, and attention, and patience of this Convention, I will give but one or two of many reasons why I desire that slavery shall be abolished immediately. I believe that by abolishing this institution at once, a greater victory will have been achieved for the Union than was achieved at South Mountain, Antietam, Gettysburg or the Wilderness. When the rebels in the South see Maryland gone beyond all possibility of hope, they will begin to fear for the final result of their mad undertaking. And again, I wish Maryland to set an example to other States—an example which I am persuaded to believe will be followed.

Many of our people desire this Convention to adopt some system of negro apprenticeship. I have nothing to say in regard to this matter, as there is no proposition relating thereto now before the Convention; but, with

your leave, I will here take occasion to say by way of finishing my confession of political faith on the subject of emancipation, I think we have enough apprentice law already, and am opposed to any system of apprenticeship that would or could carry with it a continuance of slavery one hour beyond the 25th day of December next. But, at the same time, I must say that I now see no reason why masters who may now claim to hold slaves under the existing laws of our State, under the ages of twenty-one and eighteen—males and females respectively—may not be permitted to have said slaves bound to them under the existing law of apprenticeship; and why they should not have some time allotted them for this purpose and the preference of binding these negro children be given to them. But about this I am indifferent.

One word more, Mr. President, and my confession of political faith, so far as this institution is concerned, will be completed. I think that inasmuch as the General Government has declared by joint resolution of Congress, approved April 10th, 1862, "That the United States ought to co-operate with any State which may adopt gradual abolition of slavery, giving to such State pecuniary aid, to be used by such State in its discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences, public and private, produced by such system," we have the right to ask and to demand of the General Government the aid thereby promised in case the people of the State adopt the 23d article in the bill of rights. But whether the offer of the General Government was made in good faith or not—whether I am ever to receive one cent for the slaves which I have already lost and will yet have to lose, (if I am yet a slaveholder,) I am in favor, as a matter of public utility, and because I honestly believe the continuance of slavery to be morally wrong, of the immediate and unconditional abolition of slavery in Maryland, and shall give my vote for the article now under consideration.

Mr. PETER. I have listened with no little degree of interest and attention to the arguments which have been made by the majority in this House on the 4th article of the bill of rights. The radical party have contended that this expression of a free will offering of allegiance was due to the Constitution, the laws, and the Government, as a matter of policy, of law and of right, and I could but revolve in my mind and wonder on what grounds they would offer up the sacrifice contained in the article now under consideration. But it seems there is to be a sacrifice, yea, a great holocaust offered on the part of the oppressed and down-trodden people of this State to appease the dire anger, and stay the avenging hand of some offended deity.

All government is made for the protection of its citizens in the enjoyment of all the rights and privileges not interdicted for their