

Mr. Buchanan called Mr. Brewer to order. He did not come here to listen to such language.

The President said the gentleman from Baltimore had no right to question the motives of others.

Mr. Mitchell replied to the views expressed by his colleague (Mr. Stoddert) and said he believed if this article was put in the Bill of Rights a majority of the people of Charles county would go against the constitution, no matter what else was put in it.

Mr. Stoddert was perfectly willing to submit the issue to his people, and had no doubt of the result.

Mr. Brown said the point made and urged by some gentlemen is a technical point as to whether the rule of testimony shall be changed by insertion in the Bill of Rights or by legislative enactment. If it is the right of the negro to testify, let us pass it now, and right here. The Legislature had refused to pass it against the voice of the best men of the State, and, as he believed, against the wishes of the majority of the people of Maryland. There are 180,000 people of this State to whom we have given other rights, and are they to be deprived of the only way to maintain those rights? Is not this monstrous? He desired to see this clause inserted as it came originally from the committee.

Mr. McKaig was opposed to excluding negroes from testifying. The negro now being free, he should be allowed to testify. He had known many negroes he would believe far sooner than some of their white neighbors.

Mr. Wickes regretted to differ with gentlemen for whose opinions he had so much regard. This question struck deeper down into the popular heart than many imagined. He entered his solemn protest against the adoption of the majority report. He had yet to hear of any popular voice for the change of the law. We are told that it was adopted in 1717 as necessarily incident to the state of slavery then existing. Have not free negroes existed in this State for fifty years? The Convention of 1851 did not extend the privilege of testifying to the 30,000 or 40,000 free negroes then in the State. The Convention of 1864 did not give it—a Convention held