

the subject in support of our report. It does seem strange to me that gentlemen here who have voted for emancipation in this State should now vote to exclude entirely the persons thus freed from their basis of representation. If they are freed and are suffered to remain among us, it does seem to me to be right and proper that they should be represented through the white representatives of the State, in your legislature. Of course you will not allow them to vote, but there must be some political or legislative body whose duty it shall be to take into their consideration the condition of that race, and provide such laws and regulations as their condition may require. Or is it your purpose to leave them without support or protection? Do you mean to exterminate them?

All free persons both white and black are entitled to some system of representation. This principle was adopted in the formation of the federal constitution, and has been adhered to by nearly all the States of the Union ever since. The free blacks had full representation, and the slaves were allowed to be represented as property.

Why is it that you now vote to make them free, and refuse to consider them in forming your basis of representation? Why is it that without sufficient reason or evidence, you ignore every principle of right, every example of the past? Why is it that you set up here and try to establish new dogmas, unknown to justice, honesty or civilization, and because you have the majority here, palm them upon us of the minority? I want to hear the reasons for departing from every precedent of the past. I want to hear what you have to say in support of the majority report. If I am then allowed to address the convention further upon this subject, I may hope to present such facts and evidence to the convention, as will at least bring gentlemen here to reason, and a proper sense of justice, before they are called upon to vote upon this question.

In conclusion, then, I contend that the only just basis of representation that can be possibly fixed for Maryland, must be established upon principles of compromise, such as is proposed by the minority report. And I do sincerely hope it will be adopted by the convention.

[The half hour having expired, the hammer fell.]

Mr. CHAMBERS moved that the time of the gentleman from Prince George's be extended.

Mr. BERRY. I prefer that the courtesy of the convention be extended to me hereafter. I have said now all that I desired by way of opening the debate.

Mr. EDELEN. When I came into the hall this morning, it was very far from my intention to say at this time anything upon the several propositions now before this body for consideration. But I feel that did I let the

occasion pass without attempting to point out some of the glaring and palpably unjust inequalities that stand out in every section and almost every line of this majority report, I should be false to the trust which the people of my county have in part committed to my care.

I will not attempt in the brief limit of time allowed me by the rules of this house, to refer to that branch of the question upon which my friend from Prince George's (Mr. Berry) has just spoken so much at length. I mean the principle that it is right and proper to restrict Baltimore city in her representation, because of the peculiar circumstances and conditions surrounding us in this State; that you cannot, in other words, adopt as a principle or rule, anything to apply to the whole State, so as to give Baltimore city equally with the counties, representation according to population. Let me tell the gentlemen of the committee who have signed this majority report, that they are estopped from treading that ground; that it is not allowable for them after having signed that report to come into this hall and claim for Baltimore city representation according to population, even upon the white basis. They are concluded. Look at the report. If you give Baltimore city a representation according to population upon a white basis, she would be entitled to twenty-nine members. In the very outset then this is a total departure from and ignoring of that principle in the report. To the chairman of the committee from Baltimore city (Mr. Abbott) and others who have signed it, if they undertake to condemn the minority report on this ground, I would commend the words of the poet:

"Shame to them whose cruel striking
Kills for faults of their own liking."

The point which I desire to bring to the consideration of this convention is, that the majority report has fixed the representation upon the white population alone. In this they have departed from the rule that our fathers adopted when they framed the constitution of the United States; they have departed from the rule that has been established in nearly every northern State—indeed, in nearly every State, north or south, composing this confederacy.

I have before me a few facts and figures, which will show to my friends that I am not treating this question as one like those that have heretofore divided us upon this floor. I want my friend from Talbot (Mr. Valliant,) and my friend from Worcester, who, a little while ago filled that chair (Mr. Purnell,) and my friends from Baltimore county and from Frederick county, whom I see here, and the gentlemen of the committee, and all others who are disposed to favor this majority report, to see and understand that no principle which bears such fruits as that adopted in the