

could in no way damage any portion of our State. But on the contrary, if the facts were found to be as we believe them to be, would it not, in this hour of distress, result in great amelioration to our people?

I can say for our county that famine almost stalks abroad in our land. A draft is impending over us, and we are continually, day after day, subject to bodies of military passing to and fro. I do not say it with any view to disparage our forces, but it is well known that there is no army, however well disciplined it may be, but what has its attendants, camp followers and stragglers. And I do say most unhesitatingly that it is necessary in many instances, especially after the officers have left that some male person should be about the premises to protect the females. I will say that in our town, in most if not in all instances where officers have been present, they have readily granted relief when we have been imposed upon by stragglers and camp followers. But when officers are not present it is necessary for some man to be there to assert his rights; and not only to assert his rights, but to throw around those who are endeared to him by every tie of affection that protection which they need and which they ought to receive.

Another difficulty under which we labor in our county results in consequence of the late raid. Many of us who were able but a few months ago to have placed substitutes in the service, and thus been enabled to remain with our families, are now left in a manner destitute. Is it anything more than fair and right, after we have been subjected to these heavy losses, not occasioned by ourselves, not the result of any acts of which we have been guilty—is it not fair that the government should at least be inclined to show us some little favor? Because the distinction between the portion of Maryland which I represent, and New York, Maine, New Hampshire, etc., is that they hardly realize that there is war in the land. They do not feel its desolating effects; they do not feel the terrible scourge which has so lately visited us.

Now if we have suffered in this respect, as every person must admit who will visit our county, is it but fair, if we can show this to the government, that it should at least show us some little favor, although we cannot ask it as a legal right? Again, are we not entitled to the slaves which have left our State, if they be in the government employ?

Our slaves up to this time do not stand in the position which the free white men of other States stand in. I will admit that as a free white man of the State of Maryland, if I had chosen to go to the city of New York and accept the larger bounty which that city offers, it would have been fairly entitled to the credit on my acceptance. But was that the position occupied by our slaves? They had no right to leave our employment. No man from the State of New York, or from Massachusetts, or from any other

State in the north, had the right to get one of our slaves by giving him the bounty from one of those States, and thereby get credit for him for that State. These slaves were our property, and they have no right of their own to leave this State, or to represent any other State in the service, without first obtaining the consent of their masters. Then if we have been deprived of the credit these slaves would have given us, by the large bounties offered in other States and cities, it is a wrong unjustly perpetrated upon us. And unless such State or city, obtaining a credit for our negroes, could show that it was by the express permission or license of their masters, then I contend that the government is in all honor and all justice bound to give the people of our State a fair credit for them. And not to the State at large, but to the county from which those negroes were obtained.

I do not think any gentleman of this convention can discover anything sinister in a motion of this kind. I do not think any gentleman in this body, as the representative of his county or of his district, can under any circumstances refuse to vote for a resolution of this character. It can of itself do no harm. It can throw no obstacle in the way of the general government, in carrying out the draft as soon as it may think it right and proper to do so. It will be a mere matter of investigation. If we are fairly entitled to it, let us have it. If not, then the government can refuse to grant us the favor. They have the right to refuse, whether we are rightfully entitled to this credit or not. But the question with me is this; if we present to them a fair, honest, and just case, will they turn a deaf ear to the petition of the people of Maryland through this convention?

I would like to see every man in this convention vote for a matter of this kind. It would then have force in it; it would carry weight with it; it would present this State as a body to the government, and the government merely as a favor might perhaps grant it—for we can only ask it as a favor, not as a legal right.

Now as regards the State being credited with eight thousand men. Perchance she may be so credited; perchance she may have that many regularly enlisted. But is that a fair proportion of the able-bodied negro men that have left our State? It is a matter, I will admit, that I have not fully investigated, that I have not examined into. But if other counties have furnished able-bodied negro men in proportion to our county, then the State is certainly entitled to a much larger credit than eight thousand.

Mr. SCHLEY. I do not say that only Maryland has been credited with only eight thousand men. But I say that eight thousand and more of her deficiency has been stricken off, been obliterated from the requisition made upon her.