

sirable I think as a protection to the best interests, as providing for the best interests of these minors.

And it seems to me also to be an act of justice to those who have had the care of rearing them during a state of infancy. In that state they have been utterly unable to render any remuneration whatever to those who have had the charge of them. Now I am not one of those who believe that slavery in this State is, or ever was, or ever could be profitable even should it continue to exist. I believe that the expenses of the slaveholder in rearing his slaves, and in providing for them after they have passed the period of life in which they can be serviceable, far overbalances in many instances all the profits accruing from them while in a condition to render service. In the case of these minors, they have not been able to render any service; the majority of them are still in a state of infancy from one to ten and twelve years of age.—During that period the masters have had the care of them, have had to provide for their wants, to feed and clothe them. And it seems to me it would be but an act of justice to the masters to let them have their services until they arrive at the age of maturity, so as to remunerate them for the care they have exercised during their infancy.

I am not an advocate of State compensation; never have been. But I have thought that it would be prudent for the general government, and right for the general government to grant compensation. But the probability is that no such compensation ever will be granted. It seems to me, therefore, in view of that fact, in view of that probability, that we can afford to do at least this much, to give to the masters, when they are the proper persons to have charge of them, the services of these minors until they arrive at majority.

I will not at this time, trouble the convention with any further remarks, except to say in reference to the proposition of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stockbridge,) concerning the education of these minors, that I have no objection whatever to the education of the negroes of this State. I hope the time will come when they will be educated, and be better prepared thereby to become useful members of society. But if gentlemen will look at the proposition I have submitted they will find that it provides for apprenticing them subject to such regulations as are now or may be hereafter prescribed by law. We expect to have a legislature who will make the necessary statutory law to carry out the principles embodied in the organic law which we are now framing. We expect them to conform that law in all respects not only to the letter but to the spirit of what we have done here. And I have no doubt that they will in regard to this special subject, enact a law that will make it obligatory upon masters of apprentices, whether white or black,

and black as well as white, to teach them to read and write. Let us leave this matter then to the legislature, and not descend here to specific legislation; leave that to the body properly having charge of it.

Mr. NUGLEY. If the amendment of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stockbridge) were a practicable amendment, if the idea and the purposes which it contemplates could be practically realized in the community where it will and must necessarily be operative, I should not object to going for it. But I cannot see how, in the present state of society in the large slaveholding counties of this State, that proposition can be made of any practical benefit. There are no schools organized now for the education of these colored people. I cannot see how, without a great deal of preparatory legislation and work and arrangement this proposition of the gentleman from Massachusetts, [laughter]—I beg the gentleman's pardon; I really did not mean to say that; I meant "the gentleman from Baltimore city" (Mr. Stockbridge)—I do not see how it could possibly be carried out. I am in a general way, a friend of the education of both the black and the white. I believe that education is a means of lessening crime, and forwarding the progress of mankind, both black and white. But at this particular stage of the history of Maryland, I do not see how that possibly could be of any benefit; therefore I shall not vote for it.

I shall not vote for the amendment proposed by the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stockbridge.) But I shall vote for and support the section proposed by the gentleman from Caroline (Mr. Todd.) I think we have gone far enough—I do not see any necessity for us to go stark mad—upon this subject of emancipation. I do not see any necessity for us to run into the opposite extreme. There is always a tendency, when we leave one extreme to run into the opposite extreme. Can we not stop short of that? Can we not look a little to the good of the people of Maryland? Can we not look a little to the good of the emancipated negro? Can we not take into consideration the public welfare a little? Now if we emancipate these negroes, as we hope to emancipate them, and turn them loose in these large populous negro communities, what will be the effect? In the fall of the year, a mother and a father, with four or five or more helpless children, are turned loose. Provisions are scarce and immensely dear; clothing of all sorts is dear. I ask gentlemen how it will be possible for the parents of these negro children to carry them through the coming winter with comfort, or even without starvation?

Mr. CUSHING. Cannot a man of eighteen or twenty years of age get through the winter?

Mr. NUGLEY. I am not speaking about him.