

wipe out all funded debt; but it will certainly and speedily come in the conveniences of the slaveholders themselves, when their freed slaves perhaps will stay with them, and they will be able to hire on favorable terms the labor of the men who are now their slaves. As it is now, the slaves will not stay; because the temptation of freedom lies beyond; but when free they will stay. They will have to labor, and it will be alleviated by the consciousness that the man is working for himself, and not for another; that he is working for his wife, and not because he is a chattel. It will be the labor of a man animated by the desire of providing for his family, and not that of a man forced to work for his owner.

There will come immigration into Maryland. Free white men, of whom we have heard so much, will come, because they will then be equal; they will not be trodden down; they will not be denied freedom of speech; they will have the right to speak as they think, responsible to none for the results; they will not be legislated for by a class with whom they have no sympathies; they will not be legislated for by a class the very principles of whose existence are in antagonism with the freedom which they enjoyed at home. But they will come here to a free and regenerated State, a State which has been seventy-four years or more learning to be what it ought to have been three-quarters of a century ago. We have learned our lesson late; but we have learned it well. While others may learn it in the printed book, it has been reserved to us to learn it in three years of hard, bloody battle; but we have learned it well. The reflection of the sun upon its red characters has printed it deep in our hearts. It is not with us a thing of memory; but a thing of life. I tell you that lessons learned under such circumstances are not to be forgotten.

With reference to what we have heard so often, that if there ever occurs another revolution of the wheel of fortune this thing will be undone, I tell gentlemen now that so long as God sitteth upon the rim of the universe, so long, if now we pass an emancipation act for the people of Maryland, so long will Maryland be free. There exists no power below the power of omnipotence ever again to bring slavery into Maryland, unless you first deprive her of all her present population, and then deprive the General Government of all power whatever. Nay, more; you must not leave one free State among the States of the North; because so strong is that feeling now, that if there were but one, she would wage a crusade which would gather under her banners the aggregate force of the civilized world to sweep out slavery.

Slavery comes not back to the land from which it has once been driven. Once drive it back, and I assure you, it will never return.

Gentlemen are troubled about what is to become of the free negroes. God suffers not a sparrow to fall upon the ground without his care, and counts the very hairs of our heads; and I humbly submit that He may be trusted with that question.

Let those who have work for free negroes pay them just wages, and all we have will not be near enough for the labor we need. There are agencies established to bring labor from Scotland and Ireland, because we have not labor enough. Some gentlemen seem to think that the whole four millions of the Southern States are to come into Maryland to settle. If ever the South is free, if ever the arms of the United States shall have closed around her and freed her despite herself, and shall have done what under the Constitution she guaranteed to do, given her a republican form of government, then four millions of slaves, for the labor that will be demanded in that territory, will be but as a drop in the bucket. The whole world will scarcely afford labor enough for that immense territory. Their arms will be stretched out on every side to free men everywhere, to till those fields where there is the prospect before them of unlimited wealth. They will stretch forth their hands to the world for aid. Four millions of beings for all that vast Southern territory, where you can travel for miles, in some places for days, and look not upon the face of a living human being!

When there shall be peace in that land, it may not be a place where the man who has owned another may care to live with the one he has owned. But the 500,000 slaveowners may migrate, and in one year their places would be more than filled by others. It is human nature that a man who has owned another should be reluctant to employ the man he once owned. Power once given, it is hard to take away. We cling to it, however bad it may be. Every instinct of our heart tells us that it is wrong; but from prejudice, education, habit, and convenience, we cling to it. I can understand how they will make the most desperate effort and fight to the last gasp to prevent its being taken away. But gentlemen, in conclusion, I will tell you one thing. The testimony of Maryland, the history of Maryland, the government of Maryland upon this question prove that—

“The mills of the gods grind slowly,  
But they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience stands he waiting,  
With exactness grinds he all.”

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. Before I take leave for a time of this Convention, I feel it my imperative duty, (although I am suffering somewhat from indisposition,) a duty which I owe to those whom it is my honor to represent upon this floor, to enter my feeble protest against the doctrines and the pur-