

bare earth for the floor, and less than six feet in height, and "it is no uncommon thing for two and three, and sometimes for four families, to live and sleep together in one of these rooms, without any division or separation whatever for the different families or sexes. There are very few cellars where at least two families do not herd together in this manner." And on these miserable sleeping places, the father, mother, sons and daughters crowd together in a state of filthy indecency, and *much worse off than the horses in an ordinary stable.*

But, sir, enough of this sickening scene. Let him who is disposed to pour out such floods of tears over the condition of the negro slave of the South, read the book of Mr. Kay, and then honestly compare his condition with that described by our author.

Sir, the consideration at last, that determines and will ever determine the question of the existence of slavery, is the consideration of interest. If you show me a people whose interest it is to have slavery, I will show you a people that maintains slavery, and will maintain it so long as that interest exists—and the reverse is also true. You may talk about "moral rights," "letting the bondman go free," "to do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," "the year of jubilee," &c., &c., but the question, at last, is the question of interest. If you cannot get labor cheaper than in the form of slavery, you will have slavery; and if it is cheaper and more profitable to sell the slaves and pocket the money, and hire the labor, that will be done.

We have had a practical illustration of that in this country. In 1776, every State in the Union—except, perhaps, Massachusetts—was slaveholding, but finding it more profitable, in their cold latitudes, to sell the slaves, pocket the money, and hire labor, (so that when one died there was no pecuniary loss to the employer, and if one was sick, he could be turned off to get well or die, as the case might be,) and they have done so, until slavery has moved Southward, and Mason and Dixon's line is its Northern boundary.

Now, sir, I would like to have some of these gentlemen who are so sensitive about the existence of slavery, and whose moral sensibilities are so exceedingly tender, that it is "a great stumbling block in the way of their religion"—I would like to have them explain to me, where is the difference in principle between holding the thing itself and holding the equivalent of that thing in money? If any mortal man can explain the difference in principle between holding a slave, and selling that slave to some one else, and putting the proceeds of said sale in your pocket, I should be very glad to hear it. And that is just the case with the Yankee nation. They kidnapped or bought the negroes on the African coast, they brought them here, kept them

here, so long as it was profitable to keep them, and when greater profit could be realized by a sale of them, then they sold them to the South, and now have the money thus obtained invested in banks, ships and manufactories, all engaged in the acquisition of greater gain, by working up and transporting the cotton, tobacco and rice, and other products of slave labor, and whilst their pious souls are thus engaged at home, they are intent upon stealing our negroes that they have sold to us. And notwithstanding their hatred of slavery and slaveholders, did anybody ever hear of a Northern manufacturer refusing to sell goods to the South, or of a refusal to secure a debt by taking a mortgage upon slaves, or of the loss of a debt by an unwillingness to foreclose said mortgage. No, sir; it is an absurdity to talk about such a thing. The Yankee north and the Yankee here, is for the abolition of slavery, when he has no slave of his own to lose, and when it becomes his interest to do so.

It is a dangerous experiment at all times to change a well established, well understood order of things. All sudden convulsions are dangerous and are to be dreaded. I know that the gentleman from Baltimore (Mr. Stirling,) in the discussion of another subject, a few days ago, said that it is in great convulsions that the spirit of liberty springs forward, and that great results ensue from these sudden emergencies. But I say that in all the violent convulsions that have shaken nations, although liberty may have survived and triumphed at last, yet it has been "as it were through death," and all experience proves that the well-trodden, well-understood path to which we are accustomed, is the safest and best. The gentleman (Mr. Daniel) says that this Convention speaks the sentiments and the wish of the people of the State. Sir, it does no such thing; it is an idle mockery; it is an insult to call the last farce an election. This Convention does not represent the people of the State, and we have had no fair election in this State for the past three years. Take away your Federal cannon and armies and military satraps, and let the people vote, fully and freely, and if then they choose to abolish slavery, I am content, for I acknowledge their right to do so. But even then you cannot rightfully take private property without compensation. To talk about this Convention being an exponent of the sentiment of the State, is an insult added to outrage. Why, sir, look at the city of Baltimore, sending the delegation now sitting in this Convention, by a vote, less than one-third of the ordinary, usual average vote, and so in almost every county. Sir, the wonder is that under the system of bullying, and threats, and proclamations, and armed interference, the wonder is that any one opposing the views and wishes of the administration at Washington, finds a place here. I