

fall from the arms of the slave, and the banner of freedom is to be unfurled," the question at last, freed from all these rhetorical surroundings, that addresses itself to our judgment, is, will Maryland be more likely as a free State, to promote the continuance or restoration of the Union, than as a slave State? Three years ago, when this war commenced, I thought that a rebellion of that magnitude, embracing nine millions of people, could not be put down by force; that the safety, welfare and interest of all, would best be promoted by letting them try the experiment. Nations are like individuals, in fact are nothing but the aggregate of individuals, and the same motives that prompt to the adoption of a particular course of conduct in the one case, operate in the other. What would be the course of an individual in such a case? Why, sir, common sense teaches, that after having tried his new course of life, if he found it to operate to his detriment he would change, and return to that which was more to his profit and interest. I believed then and I believe now, that the way to have preserved the Union was by keeping peace, and if the South would go, if they would listen to no terms, then to let them go—"to let the erring sisters depart in peace." I have seen no good result to the Union from war. I see in it the triumph of abolition.

Maryland is about to try the experiment of free labor. She is about to inaugurate a new policy within her limits. As a citizen of the State, so long as I remain within it, it is my duty to conform to whatever, in the form of law, a majority of her people shall determine. But in view of the past, I do not believe that the interests of the State are going to be promoted by the proposed change. I regard it as a sudden shock, that will shake to the very centre, all the interests of the State, and for a while at least, tend very nearly to their prostration. Gentlemen have told you, and told you truly, that in many of the counties the slaves form nearly one-half, or a very large part of the taxable property. You strike away at one blow all that taxable property. How is the deficiency to be supplied? Governments must be supported, and it takes money, and in these days, no little sum of money to meet all the demands of the tax gatherer, and the cry is still for more. Where is the money to come from? How are the people to get it, to pay their taxes? The drafts are taking all the young and able bodied to the field of battle, to fill bloody graves, or to return maimed and crippled, and your fields are to go uncultivated from the want of labor. You are striking away one-half of the taxable basis, and leaving the same or an increased amount of taxes to be raised on the remaining half. Let those gentlemen who vote for this proposition, answer these things to their people.

I will not detain the Convention longer, simply saying that I do not believe the change

proposed will benefit the negro. I believe it will make his condition infinitely worse. Statistics show such to have been the result, wherever it has been tried. A free negro population is a curse to themselves and to any community in which they reside, when they approximate in numbers to the white population.

I do not believe it will benefit the State, because it is not the growth and result of natural causes, but is a forced condition of things under the peculiar emergencies of the times. As regards the moral views of the question, and the tender consciences of those gentlemen who have no scruples about holding a negro in slavery until it becomes their interest to sell him, and who then prate of the blessings of freedom, I shall speak no further. My conscience is perfectly at ease. I hold negroes, have held them ever since I attained to age of manhood, and if the laws of the State would permit it, would probably continue to do so. It is a practice sanctioned by all time and by all people, from the earliest ages of which we have any knowledge down to this present hour, by the best, as also by the worst of mankind. Whether Providence in His wise purposes has seen fit to work out the salvation and liberation of the negro—through a war that is desolating and destroying this nation—at the cost of the white race, is a problem that I shall not attempt—like the gentleman from Baltimore—to solve.

Mr. STIRLING moved to take a recess until eight o'clock this evening.

Mr. HEBB demanded the yeas and nays, and they were ordered.

The question being taken, the result was—yeas 39, nays 34—as follows:

Yeas—Messrs. Goldsborough, President; Abbott, Annan, Baker, Cunningham, Daniel, Davis, of Washington, Earle, Ecker, Farrow, Galloway, Greene, Hebb, Hoffman, Hopkins, Hopper, Keefer, King, Markey, McComas, Mullikin, Murray, Neglev, Nyman, Parker, Purnell, Robinette, Russell, Sands, Schley, Schlosser, Smith, of Carroll, Smith, of Worcester, Sneary, Stirling, Stockbridge, Sykes, Valliant, Wooden—39.

Nays—Messrs. Audoun, Berry, of Baltimore county, Berry, of Prince George's, Billingsley, Blackiston, Bond, Briscoe, Brown, Carter, Chambers, Clarke, Crawford, Davis, of Charles, Dennis, Duvall, Edeien, Gale, Harwood, Henkle, Hollyday, Horsey, Johnson, Jones, of Cecil, Larsh, Lee, Marbury, Mitchell, Miller, Morgan, Parran, Ridgely, Smith, of Dorchester, Turner, Wickard—34.

So the Convention took a recess until eight o'clock.

EVENING SESSION.

The Convention reassembled at 8 o'clock, P. M.

The roll was called, and the following members answered to their names: