

divers plagues were sent upon the land of Egypt, and the king who reigned there at that time.

This subject is one of the most profound importance ever submitted to the American people. It has always presented a difficult problem to solve. I have never found any satisfactory solution to it but the one I have given to the convention. And I find that Bishop Hopkins is impressed with that view. I found it intimated thirty odd years ago, when the colonization scheme was adopted; it was supposed that the way was then opened, and that the colonization society would then fulfil the designs of Providence. But it is very apparent from the failure of that scheme that the colonizationists were a little too fast.

Mr. SANDS. Will my friend allow me to ask him whether he remembers the reason that Bishop Hopkins assigns for not permitting negroes to testify, and the authority upon which he rests it?

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. I do not remember.

Mr. SANDS. I only wanted to call attention to some of the enormities contained in that book.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. I understand the gentleman said in this convention that he was in favor of keeping them entirely distinct from the whites. And I suppose he is not in favor of allowing them to testify or sit on juries, &c. He is for keeping them down in their present degraded condition, except that they do not receive the protection of their masters.

I had no idea, whatever, that this subject was coming up to-day. I had intended to arrange a few thoughts upon the subject when it should come up, but I have had to speak to-night without a moment's preparation. I have no desire to consume the time of the convention. I have never offered an amendment, submitted a proposition, or made a speech here for the purpose of consuming the time of the convention. I have spoken to-night only under a sense of fulfilling the expectations of those I have the honor to represent here, and who would be disappointed if I permitted this action without the remarks which I have submitted. I will say that unless this subject is relieved of these objectionable features by some amendment of this sort, gentlemen will find, when this subject goes to the people for their sanction, that this will be a great stumbling block in the way of the adoption of any constitution they may frame. Unless some provision is made for the helpless, the infirm, and those who are not able to take care of themselves, they will find a very unanimous vote in all the slave counties against this constitution.

Mr. BOND. I now renew the motion to adjourn.

The PRESIDENT. That motion is not in or-

der; no business having intervened since the motion to adjourn was last voted on.

Mr. PETER. According to the decision of the chair, it would be impossible to effect an adjournment for a week, when a question is before the house, if gentlemen choose to speak upon it for that length of time.

The PRESIDENT. The chair has nothing to do with that. The parliamentary rule requires some intervening business.

Mr. MILLER. It seems to me that every political advantage which the majority of this house can possibly attain by their handling of this subject of slavery, will be accomplished by the immediate, unconditional and uncompensated emancipation of the slave. I would ask what political object is to be attained by any further legislation upon that subject? Now the amendment which I propose does not effect, in any degree, emancipation immediate, unconditional and uncompensated. It merely appeals to the humanity of the people of Maryland in regard to what Mr. Lincoln has called a houseless, homeless, landless class of population. It does not present them as a class to their sympathies, but merely those of them who by their age, or other cause, are unable to maintain themselves and get a sufficient livelihood and support. It provides that it shall be the duty of the legislature in such cases to make provision by law, to provide out of the State treasury, if necessary, for their support and maintenance.

The object I had in view in submitting this section, was to ascertain the sense of the house in regard to whether they would, or would not make provision for this class of our negro population. It is well known, that in the slaveholding counties there will be a very large number of slaves too old to support themselves, and too old to come within the provisions of the apprentice laws of the State as they now exist; and many of those who are not too old to come within the provisions of the apprentice laws may be unable to maintain themselves from some physical disability. There are many of that class of negroes.—What this section proposes to do is simply to declare that the legislature shall provide in some way for their support and maintenance, and not throw this entire burden upon the counties in which those slaves are manumitted. For if no provision is made, the counties will have to be taxed to double and treble the amount they are now taxed, for the support of paupers in their counties and towns. It is simply for the purpose of testing the humanity of this body in reference to this class of persons, that I have offered this section. I merely wished to explain the object of this section; having done so I leave it to the convention.

The question recurred upon the following amendment submitted by Mr. JONES, of Somerset:

Add to the proposed section the following: