

stable, however humble his situation in life might be, rather than to have the ceremony performed by that man, who for the sake of gaining a little paltry cash, made the ceremony a mockery to an assembled crowd?

The gentleman says that this ceremony lies at the base of society. I cannot comprehend how the ceremony forms the basis of society at all. One minister may perform the ceremony one way, and another in a different way. One minister requires of the parties certain vows; another minister requires other vows, and some no vows at all. Then how does the mere marriage ceremony lie at the base of society? Not at all. As I said in regard to first principles, it is the acts of the parties themselves, their conduct, their action in life, which form the great basis of society. If they respect the vow which they have taken upon them; if they honor it and do not disgrace it, then they form the true basis upon which society should rest. But if the parties break the vows which they have taken, and violate the pledges which they assume, the great basis of society will be unsettled and unstable. We have had sad experience of that in this country already, in our large cities. We have read of it in years gone by in the large cities of Europe; and now, alas, the same things which we have read in past years as existing in European life, are fast becoming true of our American cities.

If the gentlemen from Howard and from Baltimore would make this marriage vow all that they would have it, if they would build society upon a firm foundation, or upon a rock which the tempests should break around and should not disturb, if they would raise up their children to honor and respect it, if they would make them ornaments of that society, let them follow the teachings of Christ and receive his commands, and let them receive the teachings of the word which he has given them; and then, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, Quaker, Jew or Gentile, if the man regards his obligations as a husband and the woman her obligations and duties as a wife, then will society rest upon a firm foundation.

But really I think that the gentleman from Anne Arundel (Mr. Bond) is altogether right, that we are truly wasting time. I only regret that I have taken up so much time of the convention in discussing this question. But I hold, from my respect for the Quakers in my own county, whom we term there and who term themselves the Society of Friends, if they think it right to be married by a magistrate, a mayor, or any civil officer, that they do not desecrate it, or make it a mockery. As the gentlemen from Baltimore and from Howard do not think the permission granted to the Quaker would make a mockery of it, or desecrate it to marriage by a foul-mouthed man, although they think that other

men professing other religious views, or having no religious views at all, ought to be married by some holy, pious clergyman, I rose to show that others ought to have equal rights with the Quaker, and that their marriage would be as holy and as much to be respected as if they were married by a minister.

Mr. DANIEL. Lest my view upon this subject should be misunderstood, I wish to explain the reasons which govern me in voting for one or the other of these propositions, and I care very little whether that of the gentleman from Howard (Mr. Sands) or of the gentleman from Baltimore (Mr. Stirling.) I think that the gentlemen who have taken the view that this simple proposition as first offered, ought to be adopted by this convention, and if we do not so adopt it, we make an invidious distinction against this religious denomination called Friends or Quakers, rest upon a proposition wholly wrong. I think that the truth with regard to either of these amendments to the original proposition, is just the contrary. Suppose we throw open the door and adopt the proposition simple and plain as it is proposed. Then we are asked to violate the religious sense of all other religious denominations in order to oblige this one. They can be obliged, I think, just as well by either of the propositions as by the one suggested. I think that is the state of the case, that we are asked to pass this provision, which I certainly think would violate the religious sense of a large portion of the people of this State, to throw wide open the doors to everybody who may marry.

After all that has been said by the gentleman who has just addressed this convention, that the marriage contract consists after all in its proper performance, there is a sanctity around the very marriage ceremony itself, as being performed by a minister of the gospel, there is a sacredness about that very ceremony that tends to render marriage more sacred and more inviolable through all life. I do believe that if you thus allow everybody in the community to be married by justices of the peace, it is pretty much the same as allowing anybody in the community to perform the ceremony; for justices of the peace have no more religious sanctity than any other men or any other business in the whole community. It will be breaking down and degrading the religious sanctity of the ceremony.

But I am willing to make an exception of this estimable class of religious people, for whom I have the highest respect. They are my neighbors in the city of Baltimore, and live all around me, and I may say there is not one religious denomination I respect so highly—not even my own—as I do the Friends or Quakers. I am willing to give them what they ask. I am willing to say that they may be married in any way they prefer; and thus