

I have advocated the cause of universal emancipation in Maryland, and throughout the country, because I believed it to be a measure of duty, as well as urgent State necessity. But I could not justify myself to the people of Maryland, if I should give countenance to the effort now making by some impulsive men, no doubt sincere and honest in their convictions, to confer universal suffrage upon the negro race. I cordially accept the views of President Johnson in reference to the only practicable mode of adjustment between these conflicting interests. I am willing to do the colored race full justice. If they prefer to remain with us, upon terms not inconsistent with our claim to exclusive control in the government of the State, I am willing to try the experiment, without prejudice, and to the fullest extent. But I am not at liberty to withhold opinions, which were foreshadowed by me, on taking the oath of office under your New Constitution, whose provisions denied the right of suffrage to the negro, that his manifest destiny assigns him, sooner or later—not as the result of legislative compulsion, but of his own voluntary motion—to some more congenial locality, where his distinctive characteristics will furnish no barrier to his enjoyment of social and political rights, and where, under a government of his own free choice, he can pursue and fulfill the measure of his appointed usefulness. In this deliberate judgment I am supported by some of the wisest men of the country. The right of suffrage, by which it is proposed to elevate his condition, and bring him at once upon terms of social and political equality with the white race, will not postpone the solution of the problem which has been so long hanging over us. Should the time ever come, as come it may, when the freedman, under the guidance, as I believe, of unwise counsels, shall insist upon equality in your governmental affairs, in your workshops, in all the varied competitions of labor and industry, I trust that I may not over-estimate the consequences of the irrepressible conflict, which is certain to ensue, when the two races, from causes however trivial, shall stand in accepted antagonism towards each other.

These views are presented in the interest of the African race, and with reference to the warnings of an unmistakable future. I may be in error, but I trust that the sincerity and earnestness of my convictions, never more deliberately expressed, may save me from the suspicion of prejudice, in treating upon a subject of such grave magnitude, both in its bearing upon the harmonious working of our government, and the welfare of four millions of degraded and down-trodden people, who have been made free by the results of this rebellion. If I have not been controlled by the impulses of mistaken philanthropy, or the still more exacting claims of party obligation, I yield to no one in my desire to improve