

THE NEGRO POPULATION—FREEDMEN'S BUREAU.

I regret to be obliged to refer in this place to the persistent efforts which, since the date of the Proclamation of Emancipation, we are so often called to witness, to bring discredit upon the State of Maryland, in her relations with the negro population. It could hardly have been expected that in a State where the relations of master and slave, have existed since its origin, the people could have adapted themselves at once and without occasional drawback, to the radical change which has been so suddenly wrought in her domestic system. It is only a source of surprise that so much has been accomplished in so brief a space. Towards the negro race, there is no unkind feeling on the part of any respectable class of our people. On the contrary, there is not a single free State where a more sincere sympathy is felt for this unfortunate race, or more earnest efforts are being made to improve and ameliorate their degraded condition. I will go farther and venture the assertion, that the freedom of the negro and his immunity from violence and insult are as great at this moment in Maryland as in most of the States from whence these reproaches emanate; and that the negro himself, if questioned upon this point, will most probably confirm the truth of this statement. Occasional outbreaks, inseparable from all violent changes of this character, have occurred, and those not unfrequently grossly distorted, have been eagerly seized upon as the result of a prevailing public sentiment. I will simply refer to one or two.

In August last, a case of assault upon a negro was reported by an officer of the Freedmen's Bureau to have taken place in Annapolis, implicating to a grave extent the adequacy of our Courts, and the good faith of the officers charged with the execution of the laws, which, from its reputed aggravated character, found its way over the telegraph wires, to all parts of the country, to the great injustice and disparagement of the State of Maryland and her people. The case having been referred to me, by the Chief of the Freedmen's Bureau, an immediate investigation was ordered through the highest law officer of the State, whose Report, denying the truth of the alleged charges, together with my correspondence with General Howard, are herewith submitted. It will be perceived, that upon the loose representations of a subordinate of the Freedmen's Bureau, the propriety of detailing a military force to supersede the authority of the Courts, in a loyal State, was seriously entertained,

At a subsequent date, a collision between the two races occurred at a religious meeting in Anne Arundel County, which in its exaggerated proportions, was referred to, even by our own partizan press, as well as leading Journals of the North, as scarcely second in enormity to the massacre at New Orleans. This affair was also brought by me to the attention of the Attor-