

Upon the first point, the Resolutions upon their face exhibits two propositions in opposition to its retention.

It is "in contravention of the National Constitution," and "in opposition to the spirit of the age." That it is in contravention of the National Constitution, every one of us knows. By the fourteenth amendment to that Constitution it is provided that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States, or by any State, on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude." By the provisions of our own Constitution, (and such would be the case undoubtedly, without any such provision,) the Constitution of the United States is "the supreme law of the land." There being a conflict of authority, the National Constitution prevails, and the word "white" in that of the State is a mere nullity. Again, it is in opposition of the spirit of the age. The reasons which were supposed to exist why it was proper at one time to have the word in the Constitution no longer exist. Whilst a large number of the colored people in the State were in a condition of slavery, it may have been distasteful to many persons to have accorded political rights to any of that race, whether unhappily in such state of slavery or more fortunate in being free. This feeling, though to be deprecated, was perhaps natural and to be expected. But to the credit of our State, be it said, that human slavery no longer exists within its borders. From the Mason and Dixon's line to the Potomac, from the Fairfax stone to the Ocean, her citizens are free, each to pursue his own true and substantial happiness, according to the dictates of his own conscience, and restricted in his actions only by the laws of the land.

Along with the departure of slavery has departed to a great extent the feeling which once existed, that the colored people have no rights which we are bound to respect, and a new era has sprung up which accords all reasonable political rights to every citizen of the land.

Then, is not the restriction of the elective franchise to the white population, in the language of the Resolution, "in opposition to the spirit of the age?" We are constrained to believe that if this provision in our Constitution were effectual, the good sense, the liberality, the justice of our people would have, ere this, stricken it from that document and placed the seal of condemnation upon it. That it is rendered inoperative by a provision in a law of higher authority is no reason why it should remain a black, glaring blot upon the organic law of the State; that it is powerless to effect its design is no reason why it should be passed unnoticed.

The first proposition, that the word is open to censure, I consider clearly established.