

them of their property is, that it is done in the name of religion, and this covering thrown over it, has made the people as well as our Legislators hesitate, lest they should be meddling with religion. Suppose a man who was kidnapping free colored women, and carrying them into slavery, or stealing slaves from our State and carrying them into other States for sale, should plead that he was doing this on religious principles, and we must not interfere with his religious principles. Is there any man in the State so weak, as for one moment to be influenced by the suggestion?

The time has come when such pretexts will not avail. The eyes of the people have gradually opened and no man can shut them. There is a general feeling that something should be done in this matter. The memorials to the last Assembly indicated the depth of feeling among the people.

The inquiry is made what should be done? How and when?

1. So much should be done, as will secure a young woman from being compelled to go into one of these prisons against her will. No parent, or friend, or guardian, should be permitted to place any young woman in one of these prisons against her will, much less should any Priest be permitted to compel any one, as Priest Gildea did with Miss O'Neal, or when she has escaped, be permitted to compel her to return, as the laws and rules of the prison require.

2. No one should be permitted to go there, or be placed there to remain, before she is of lawful age.

3. No insane person should be permitted to enter.

Surely no sane man, who is not the maddest of bigots, and concerned in the enticing of individuals, can object to any of these principles.

That the Legislature have the right and power to pass such laws as will protect these young women of our country, who are white and free born, is as clear as it can be, to pass laws against the kidnapping of colored women.

That this thing, if right and proper, ought to be done, who will deny? If it ought to be done, why not by this Legislature? If one single soul is unjustly detained in one of these prisons, and there punished in violation of their rights, it is the solemn duty of our Legislature, and no duty can more imperatively claim their attention, to adopt such measures as shall immediately relieve that individual, and throw a safeguard around any that may be there, or any that may be in danger of such imprisonment.

You are all aware that this subject is not brought before you by stealth. It has been made the subject of public, and free and full discussion, in the press and before the people. We would not have any thing done which will not approve our own consciences, and stand the test of the most rigid investigation. The subject of Private Mad Houses is also a part of this question which deserves your consideration.