

jails are crowded with them.* It is not unfrequently the case, that one half the time of our regular jury terms of Court is consumed in the trials of these free negroes. Arson, burglary, and larceny, together with graver felonies, such as rape and murder, are fearfully on the increase with them. Almost every week we read in the newspapers where some poor, defenceless white female has been assaulted, her person abused, and then murdered. These developments are but indices to a more general eruption of their base passions, when some untoward event shall embarrass the State.

Nor do they contribute any thing towards the expenses of meeting out justice to themselves. The taxable white population have these burdens all to bear. As a class, free negroes are not to be depended upon for any field or out-door labor. They leave the country, where labor is greatly needed and full prices offered, and congregate in the villages and cities. Fond of a gregarious life, the single handed toil of the farmer has no attractions for them. No matter what the emergency or inducements, agriculture gets little or no aid from the free negro. If entirely dependent on them for labor, the farmer would soon find his fields going to waste, and Maryland would sink into bankruptcy and pauperism.

In the cities they fill such offices as house and hotel servants, boot-blacks, barbers, coachmen, steamboat servants, etc.; in the villages they keep small shops of edibles; deal in poultry, eggs, oysters and fish, and sell small wares. We are informed that all the large hotels in Baltimore city (except one) are supplied with this class of servants. Baltimore city contains nearly 30,000 free negroes.

Those of our farmers who have to depend upon hired labor to cultivate their farms find it impossible to hire the free negro by the year, and any less term would prove hazardous to his crops. His only reliance is to employ slave or white labor, both of which are becoming scarcer every year. Laws have been passed to compel them to hire by the year, but their execution has never been enforced, either because of their details, or a want of proper officers to execute them.

While our white population are removing to the West and South in proportion to the increase, thereby keeping their numbers almost stationary in most of the counties, the free negro cannot be induced to leave the State. And notwithstanding the loud professions of Abolitionists at this time, when the negro mania is sweeping over the North, it is re-

*Gov. Ligon in his last Message says, that out of 415 convicts in the State Penitentiary "nearly one half are negroes." According to the last census the free negroes amounted to one-seventh of the entire population, and that one-seventh supplies us with one-half of all the convicts.