

tude of the more extreme pro-slavery Democrats. In opposing the Constitution, this paper said—"Would to God we could picture sufficiently plain the importance of the issue now pending in this state. We . . . leave the reader to decide for himself whether he will perpetually rob his neighbour of his happiness, or whether he will vote against the inhuman, illegal and unjust instrument, and thereby declare himself a friend to the oppressed. . . . Should this infamous instrument be adopted, a perpetual line of demarcation will undoubtedly be drawn both in political, social and business life. No man who entertains any regard for his liberty, will, after the adoption of this Constitution, aid in the support of those who vote for it, and for his oppression."

But the Union party was none the less active in its support of the new Constitution, and the state was vigorously canvassed by Montgomery Blair, Thomas Swann, Henry Winter Davis, William T. Purnell, Archibald Stirling, Jr., Henry Stockbridge, John V. L. Findlay, and other prominent men of that party.

The arguments advanced by both sides in this campaign were largely a repetition of those brought forward by the Union and Democratic members of the Convention in their discussion of the provisions in regard to submitting the Constitution to the people.⁵

Throughout the entire movement leading to the Constitution, President Lincoln had been a close and interested observer, and had given it his constant personal encouragement.⁶ Being requested to aid in this final contest, on October 10 he wrote a letter to Henry W. Hoffman,⁷ which was read that evening at a Union mass-meeting in Baltimore. In this letter he stated that he would be "gratified exceedingly if the good people of the state [would], by their votes, ratify the new Constitution."

⁵ See pages 89-90.

⁶ Nicolay and Hay, "Life of Lincoln," viii, 465. ⁷ *Ibid.*, p, 467.