

trained in the pursuits of agriculture. The cultivation of the soil depended upon their labor. It is not difficult to foresee, in view of the change in the relations heretofore existing, that the near proximity of the two races at some future day may not prove advantageous to either. It cannot be expected that the negro will confine himself to the rural districts, or be content with the limited sphere in which he has heretofore moved. Education will improve and elevate his condition, but cannot erase the distinctive lines which have separated him from the white man. History furnishes no example to guide us in dealing with a subject of such grave magnitude. Anticipating the ultimate triumph of freedom, our forefathers at an early period began to make preparation for the crisis through which we are now passing. The plan of colonizing upon the coast of Africa—by voluntary emigration—under a stable government, the negro population made free by the gradual progress of Christian philanthropy, attracted the attention of some of our ablest statesmen. The separation of the two races under a system which would ensure both social and political equality, exercised a controlling influence in support of this plan, even before the subject had assumed its present proportions, now that the downfall of slavery is about to throw upon us to be provided for more than four millions of this unfortunate race, whose homes have heretofore been in our midst. It is not my purpose to enter at this time upon the discussion of plans which have baffled the wisdom of the highest statesmanship. The President is understood to have favored the acquisition, under National auspices, of a tract of territory suited to the habits of the negro race, where the nucleus of a Commonwealth may be at once commenced, with reference to the probable contingencies which are likely to occur hereafter. Such a recommendation would seem to commend itself, by the duty which we owe to both races, as a protection against jealousies which may be expected to arise, and the collisions unavoidable, in any attempt to amalgamate elements—so widely separated in natural characteristics—from each other. Whatever may be the embarrassments which may be expected to result from both our National and State policy in wiping out forever the blight which has so long hovered over us, it furnishes no sufficient argument for hesitation or delay in ridding ourselves at once of an admitted evil, and dealing with it, from time to time, as opportunities occur, according to the best lights which may be furnished in the working of our system. For years to come the labor of the colored race in Maryland may be profitably and advantageously employed. To elevate their condition, to deal kindly with their weaknesses, and to prepare them for any possible change which, in the providence of God, may be their lot in the future, would be the appropriate and generous impulse, not less than the recognized duty, of Christian men.