

out cause or excuse, the people of property in which by the previous legislation of the State they have been encouraged to invest the earnings of their honest toil and industry. The annals of civilized nations, I dare affirm, can furnish no parallel to the appalling wrong and enormity of this proceeding.

This emancipation scheme involves not alone the loss of money actually invested in slaves, but of other interests growing out of and connected with slave labor. Every one at all acquainted with the character of the soil and productions of southern Maryland, knows that tobacco is the staple product of that section; that it cannot be successfully grown and cultivated except by slave labor. Relying upon that protection which they fondly hoped the law had thrown around their rights in slave property, the landholders in that portion of the State invested large amounts of money in the building of tobacco houses on their estates, in the purchasing of machinery necessary to its production. Now, with the sudden abstraction of their slave labor, the cultivation of their most remunerative crop must cease; the land cannot be turned to profitable account, and the money invested in houses and machinery, like that in slaves, must prove a total loss.

The argument has been advanced on this floor that slavery is wrong and ought to be gotten rid of, because slave property is taxed far below its real value, while other kinds of property are assessed to their full market value. Now, I submit that this argument carries with it no force whatever. If the fact be as alleged, and there be wrong and injustice growing out of it, the legislature is at all times competent to remedy the defects of the existing system. In answer to this objection I will state, what is known to every taxpayer, that the real estate of Maryland is taxed far below its marketable value, taking the prices that were obtained before the war as a proper criterion, or even now obtained in some sections of the State. The law fixing the assessable value of slaves in Maryland was passed in the year 1852, at a time when slave property was low, and before the enhancement in price which subsequently occurred and continued up to a very recent period. No objections, that I am aware of, were urged against the law at the time of its passage, and it was concurred on all sides to be fair and equitable in its provisions.

The gentleman from Talbot, (Mr. Valliant,) presented to the consideration of the Convention a long array of facts and statistics to prove that Massachusetts was far in advance of Maryland in population and all the elements of material wealth and prosperity. This superiority is claimed to arise from the fact that Massachusetts is a free and Maryland a slaveholding State. Now, I insist that the comparative wealth and population of these two States is not attributable to the

existence of slavery in Maryland and the non-existence of it in Massachusetts. It is a notorious fact that from the earliest settlement of the country, from the day when the Puritans first landed upon the rock of Plymouth, Massachusetts took the lead from Maryland in the race of population, advancement, and wealth; and that by means of her fishing bounties, her manufactures and commerce, she has continued to maintain that superiority ever since. But if the superiority of Massachusetts, in point of population and wealth, is owing to her free labor system, why do not the same results flow from the same causes in the States of New Hampshire and Vermont. Like causes, it is said, produce the same effects the world over. According to the census of 1860, Maryland has an area of 9,356 square miles, and a population of 687,069. New Hampshire has an area of 9,280 square miles, and a population of 326,073. Vermont has an area of 10,212 square miles, and a population of 315,098. Thus it will be seen that while Maryland has an area of territory exceeding in extent that of New Hampshire only a few square miles, her population more than doubles that of New Hampshire. Vermont with an area exceeding that of Maryland nearly 1,000 square miles, has within her borders less than one half the population of Maryland. These States stand side by side with Massachusetts free from the depressive influences and blighting curse of slavery, and yet we find them greatly inferior in population and wealth to slaveholding Maryland. It is evident, then, that the superior wealth and population of Massachusetts is not the result of her system of free labor, but is referable to other causes. It has been contended on this floor that slavery exerts a deleterious influence on education, that wherever it has gained a foothold, there the people are ignorant and uneducated. But this charge is left to rest upon the naked assertion of those who make it. Certainly it was not sustained by any proof calculated to carry conviction to the mind of any one unswayed by fanaticism and prejudice. Statistical tables have been read on this point to show that Maryland has a large excess of uneducated whites over New Jersey. Let this be granted as true, and still it proves nothing against the institution of slavery. If the facts be as contended for by gentlemen on the majority side of the House, it only shows that New Jersey has adopted a better and more liberal system of education than Maryland. The gentleman from Cecil, (Mr. Scott), in the very interesting speech with which he entertained the House a few days ago, attempted to be both witty and wise. In his opinion there was a far greater necessity for incorporating in the bill of rights of Maryland the article defining the obligations of its citizens to the Federal Government than there was in the case of Massachusetts, for the rea-