

in regard to the disposition of that question, it would be on my part the excess of vanity to suppose that a more favorable response would be made to any effort of mine in the discussion of the question which is now under consideration. I do not rise with such a hope. I do not rise under such an expectation. If any good can be accomplished, I feel that it is not attainable by the humble individual who now addresses you. If any modification is to be obtained, it will not be through my instrumentality; for in the language of another, "I have neither wit, nor words, nor power of speech to stir men's souls." I have not the attributes of the finished rhetorician, that eloquence, that elegance of language, that force and strength of diction, which are calculated to enchain the attention of any auditory, and carry captive, as if by resistless force, the hearts of men. No, sir, I am no orator. Would to God that this day I were an orator! Would that I could catch the inspiration that fired the heart of Paul, when in the proud city of Athens, he declared the principles of the great I Am. Would to God that this day I had the language of living fire, the thoughts that breathe and the words that burn, that I might enter the temple of this mad fanaticism which has usurped the place of the living God, and placed by its altar the image of its idolatry. Would to God, to use a figure, that I had the power of Jove, to close this Pandora's box, the source of all our ills, which like a tempestuous torrent has swept all over our land, and has rent in twain and deluged with blood the fairest portion of God's inheritance; which has arrayed man against man, and brother against brother, in fratricidal strife; which has torn the father from the son, and the son from the father; which has entered the holiest sanctuaries of home, and caused even the wife of your bosom, whom God designed to be your solace and comforter, to smoothe the brow of care, and soften down the rough asperities of life, to be your joy, your life, amidst all the changes and vicissitudes of this ever sad and changing world—to rend asunder, in some instances, the unity of existence; which has entered neighborhoods and alienated friends who were once friends; indeed, united by the holiest ties of friendship and of blood; still more, has entered the sanctuary of God and perverted its holy purposes, prostituted its holy objects, and refused the emblems of the dying love of the meek and lowly Jesus to a certain class of men; and not content with this, has at last entered these halls, and for the first time in the history of the State, here, where sat our fathers with love and patriotism consulting together for the common weal, made us strangers to each other, not met as friends but as partisans.

Is this so, sir? Do we not all realize the picture I have drawn, that we are not here as

of old, consulting together as friends for the public weal and the public good? But I know that mortal man has not power sufficient to stay the storm. It is reserved for Him who sits upon the whirlwind and directs the storm, in whose hands are placed the destinies of nations, and with whom to-day, yesterday and to-morrow are the same, to solve in his own good time this great problem of the human race. You may ask, if I have not the vanity to believe that I can make any impression upon this body, why do I stand up in my place here to-day, and uselessly consume the time of the house. I say because I am a freeman; and although you are not disposed to do me justice, I nevertheless demand my rights. I am here upon this floor a peer amongst the proudest of your peers; and I am sent here as a delegate by my constituency to defend, if not to protect their rights; a constituency, though much maligned, the embodiment of honor and of chivalry. I am here representing a constituency largely and deeply interested in the question now before us; and not unmindful of the relations which Maryland has always sustained to this question, which her history has so nobly, so gloriously and so proudly illustrated in the past administrations, not only in the vindication of her own self-respect, but in the vindication of the constitutional rights of her citizens.

I feel upon this occasion that I should be recreant to the noble instincts of patriotism and of manhood, recreant to the honest convictions of duty and of justice, false to the principles and to the opinions of an outraged people, false to the honor, the integrity, the justice, and the covenanted faith of once proud old Maryland, did I not enter my most solemn and indignant protest against the passage of the article now under consideration; an article which, to say the least of it, is the emanation of a sickly sentimentality, and offspring of a morbid philanthropy which is not native or natural to Maryland; no, sir, not to the manor born, but an exotic sought to be incorporated into the bill of rights where it never would have received any favor, any countenance, or any encouragement, except for the accidental and extraneous influences by which we are now and have been unfortunately surrounded—an article which is unjust in all its provisions, suicidal in its policy, sectional in its application, destructive to the material interests, and the fundamental law of the land and the constitutional rights of the people of Maryland.

I ask you, not in the spirit of factious opposition, or for the purpose of evoking angry and embittered discussion, but in the frankness and sincerity of a man of honor, had this Convention assembled here three years ago, and had such a proposition as this which we are now discussing, been submitted, what would have been their feelings? There are