

ticular desire to make any remarks to-night; but with a view to occupy the time, as no one else seems disposed to speak, I will crave the indulgence of the Convention for a time, though what arrangement I have made of my argument has been very crudely made.

I thank God that I have lived to see this hour, when in the capital of my native State, with unshackled limbs and emancipated voice, I can plead the cause of a race different from our own, but equally entitled to freedom. This, I suppose, will be a sufficient answer to my friend from Charles county (Mr. Edelen,) who seemed to have some doubt whether I was native or foreign born.—Mr. President, I have some objections to this way of designating citizens of Maryland, by the appellation of foreign born and native born. If a man is a citizen of the State of Maryland, it matters not whether he was born on her soil or not, if his character is good and he fulfills the obligations of a citizen. There has been a very manifest disposition here to throw out insinuations against gentlemen who come from other parts of the country, particularly if they happen to come from New England, and more especially if they come from Massachusetts. For my part, I indulge in none of those discriminations. And least of all will I indulge in discriminations against gentlemen who come from that section of country which so earnestly and nobly maintains the rightful authority of our government in its time of danger.

I hope gentlemen will excuse me, if in the first effort, after our own emancipation, I should indulge in a little extra liberty of speech. The gentlemen on the other side of this great question have had the fullest liberty of speech ever since my earliest recollections, while that liberty has been denied to men holding the views which I now entertain. I shall not intentionally abuse that liberty of speech I have now gained; but if I run into some excesses, I hope it will be attributed to the unwonted freedom I now enjoy.

I was very sorry to hear some remarks which fell from my friend from St. Mary's (Mr. Billingsley,) and also some a few days before from my very venerable and excellent friend from Kent (Mr. Chambers.) They both planted themselves, with a very great show of bravery, upon the right of free speech, as if that was in any way endangered or restricted in this House; and they seemed to pride themselves greatly upon their determination to indulge and enjoy a freedom which nobody ever denied them. And the latter gentleman more particularly declared that he would indulge in the liberty of speech at the mouth of the pistol and the cannon. I thought it was extremely unkind, when this Convention has sat here day after day, and allowed gentlemen on the other side to get off three or four speeches in succession,

without a word of reply, for those gentlemen to come in here and avow their determination to have liberty of speech. I care nothing about it so far as this House is concerned, because we all understand what the facts really are. But it carries the impression beyond these walls that there is some disposition on the part of the majority to restrict liberty of speech here.

Mr. BILLINGSLEY. I am not aware of having used any such expressions. I spoke of my rights here as a peer of this body, and said I came here to vindicate my constituents.

Mr. SCOTT. It was the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers) who talked about pistols and daggers and cannon, and such things.

Mr. CHAMBERS. Who? I? I think the gentleman must be mistaken. I have no recollection of anything of that sort. I spoke about the abridgment of the liberty of speech, and said, as I say now, that the people of this State and of the United States, have been abridged of their liberty of speech. But I am not going to shoot the gentleman; he may depend upon it.

Mr. SCOTT. I have no fears of that. But the idea of the gentleman seemed to be that he was in danger of being shot. If we had threatened pistols and cannon on others there might have been some point in such remarks, otherwise I do not see what application they can have here.

Mr. President, the wide range this discussion has taken rather confounds and confuses me, to know where to commence to gather up the many fragments of argument which have been scattered around here.

Now, with regard to the arguments which have been drawn from Scripture—and which I believe every speaker on the other side has indulged in—I have only to say that when a speaker forsakes the beaten track of history and the light of experience, and plunges into the obscure and misty records of antiquity to drag therefrom fragments of Scripture, disjointed and but little understood, I think it but manifests the weakness of the cause he advocates. I will say this: that if they are going to prove the institution of slavery by the Scriptures, I would suggest that the laws of Moses were not confined to slavery alone, but embrace other subjects very distinct from slavery, and if the laws of Moses are good authority for the institution of slavery, they are equally good for other institutions. And when gentlemen parade Scripture here as a warrant for holding men in bondage, I want them to understand that it furnishes the same warrant for every other institution of the Jews. And if we are to be guided by the law of Moses, we might tear down our churches, dismiss our preachers, and then ordain priests and resort to burnt offerings and other sacrifices. And as the gentleman from Caroline (Mr. Todd) well said, it would jus-