

proving his just right and natural claim to liberty.

Mr. MILLER. I suppose the gentleman would not let me answer him now.

Mr. SANDS. Now, in regard to the section under consideration: Shall Maryland pay the price of these liberated slaves? First, shall there be compensation? Now there are several things involved in that. If Maryland has taken this property for public uses, there may be some shadow of right in the argument I have heard here. But if I can prove, or if it is the common-sense of mankind all the world over, outside of the Southern confederacy and its sympathizers, that slavery died in the house of its friends, what right have you to ask us to pay for it? They killed it, they struck the blow; and they say now, pay for the dead negro. That is consistent, and right, and moral, and legal, and all that; of course it is.

Now another consideration. Who is to pay for these negroes? The people of the State at large. Now I put this question: has slavery ever been valuable in Maryland? If it has not, then what are we to pay for? If it has been valuable, then who has had the value? You can take either horn of the dilemma you please. If it has not been valuable, please do not ask us to pay; if it has been valuable, and you have had the value, then please do not ask us non-slaveholders to pay you when you have had all the benefit.

And another thing is this: my friend said that we were manumitting in Maryland in obedience to the will of the general government. Now that is not the case; it is in obedience to our own will. If the general government should intimate to us to-morrow that they did not wish us to manumit, we should be very apt to remind them of the eleventh commandment, which is—"Mind thy own business." It is the people of Maryland who are longing for emancipation, who are going to have emancipation.

Now this "institution," as they call it; I do not know how it ever got that name. There are some other names that might offend ears polite; and therefore I will not use them; but I think they might be much more applicable than this name "institution." I just want to remind my friend that we have got outside of the case of Somerset, as I once intimated to them, a very important precedent for the emancipation of slaves without compensation. They will find it fully reported in Exodus. I want to remind them, too, that emancipation must be right, because there it was done by the direct act of God himself. It was done without compensation, and when slavery existed upon a basis infinitely stronger than it exists here in this country. Now mark me: slavery in Egypt, when disturbed by God himself, had existed under the only plea that ever afforded a shadow

of justification for slavery; justification, not natural right. It is argued in the books that slavery first existed among men by the taking of captives in war; that the captor had the right to take the lives of his prisoners; and that if he spared the lives of those he took captive, it was his own gift, and he had the right to the benefit of it. That I say is the stronger basis upon which was ever built up an argument in support of human bondage. The captor in just war had a right to take the life of his prisoner, and refusing to take that life he was entitled to the services of the prisoner for life. Did not slavery in Egypt exist upon exactly that basis? In a war between the Egyptians and the Hebrews, had not those Hebrew captives been carried into slavery into Egypt? Therefore, did not slavery in Egypt rest upon the express ground of the right of the captor to his prisoner in war?

Mr. MILLER. Does the gentleman say that is the way the Hebrews got into Egypt?

Mr. SANDS. I guess that is about it. There is no account of any being sold there, except Joseph; he was an exceptional case. I think the only account the Bible gives of this matter, is that for their sins God sent the Hebrews into Egypt into bondage. However he may have sent them there; whether he took them up bodily and landed them down there, or whether it was by war as into Babylon, or elsewhere, I say that slavery existed in Egypt upon the only ground that affords a rational pretext in favor of slavery; they were captives to that people.

Mr. TODD. I would remark to the gentleman from Howard (Mr. Sands) for the information of the gentleman from Anne Arundel (Mr. Miller,) that the title upon which the Hebrews were held in bondage in Egypt, was not so good a one as that which the gentleman from Howard has placed it upon; he has placed it upon the strongest possible ground. The Hebrews emigrated into Egypt, and were afterwards made slaves without any justification in war.

Mr. SANDS. Take it that way, then; that they went into voluntary bondage; better still; they were not even captive bondmen.

Mr. TODD. No, sir; I do not say that.

Mr. SANDS. Well, however they got there, whether by common law, or by statute law, they were there for over four hundred years. And if that length of time did not give a fair and valid title by prescription—that is what I want to come to—if over four hundred years did not give a valid title by prescription, I should like to know, where, upon the same ground, is the title to the slaves in Maryland? These gentlemen do not, of course, contend that slavery has existed in Maryland so long as it existed in Egypt, over four hundred years. Yet the owner who was required by the Lord, by His own providential act, to give up that slave, could turn in the face of