

force the fugitive slave law; appealing to other Union men to stand by them and rescue the State out of the hands of those who were supposed to have some sympathy with those in the South. There are thousands of them who have thus been deceived and deluded and ruined; many of them who owned slaves having been rendered utterly penniless. And I do think it is adding insult to injustice that they should be stigmatized as rebels against the government, and as having forfeited all claim to the protection of the government.

I have heard a great deal of this talk about loyalty here; it appears in every resolution. What does it mean? Does it mean a faithful and honest and conscientious adherence to the constitution and laws of your country? That is a standard we can all understand.

Mr. SANDS. I hope my friend will understand that I mean no discourtesy now to him personally, when I say that I do not think his argument applies to the question before the convention.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. It is in reply to reasons which have been addressed to the convention, to take no steps whereby it may be possible for any slaveholder to get any compensation from the State or the federal government. And when, under some influence of compunction of conscience, the convention has seen the propriety of providing them some sort of security for the future, these arguments are used to get this body to retrace its steps. I am surprised that the gentleman who said that he had pledged himself to his constituents, upon his platform, to use every honorable effort to get compensation from the general government, should now say that the federal government is under no legal or moral obligation to pay a dollar. What sort of an honorable effort is that?

I trust the convention will not reconsider this section. The very best men in the State, those who have stood by the government from the beginning of this rebellion, who have denounced it as violently as any men in the State; who have used every effort and every faculty and every power to sustain the government, with the expectation that the government would protect them—those men had a right to rely upon the faith of the government; they had constitutional guarantees, and had no right to suppose that those intrusted with the powers of the government would misuse them, or forfeit the pledges they had made to the people, and convert this war from a war for the restoration of the Union according to the constitution, into a war to destroy all the guarantees to their property, and to inflict a blow upon the good faith of the country and the credit of the country; shaking the confidence of the people in all parts of the land, and in all parts of the Christian world, in the good faith of the government, and rendering your securities in the

public markets insecure. For if they have no sense of justice, if they are determined, when they have the power, to override all obligations, and to strip the people of any hope of any compensation hereafter, if that is the temper manifested by the people, what security can any man feel in taking your public securities of any sort? What guarantee have they that you will ever pay a dollar, any more than the slaveholder had guarantees that you would protect him in his rights of property? The solemn guarantees of the constitution of the United States, and of the State Maryland, are both overridden, both set at defiance, both utterly broken down. How then can you expect to sustain the credit of the country? How can you expect that those upon whom you rely to furnish you with the sinews of war, when they witness such open, bare-faced breaches of the public faith, can trust you when you pledge the public faith to repay them the money you propose to borrow of them?

I say the action of this convention in thus repudiating every principle of natural justice and constitutional obligation will go farther to destroy the confidence of the people in the stability of the government, and the good faith with which their promises are to be redeemed, than anything that has taken place during the whole of these unfortunate troubles. I therefore trust that the convention will not reconsider this reasonable proposition which was offered by the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Stockbridge,) but that they will adhere to their decision, in order that there may be some evidence perpetuated, by which, in time to come, when these unfortunate difficulties shall have passed away; when reason and a sense of justice shall return, as I feel a confidence they will, to the American people; when passions shall have calmed down, and reason again resume her throne, and the madness of the hour shall have gone by, those who have confided justly and reasonably, in the estimation of all honorable men, in the protection of the government—they, or their children, or those who are to come after them will not be entirely disappointed in their reliance; but that justice, though temporarily repudiated, will ultimately triumph, and right will be done to all.

Mr. NOLLY. There has been a great deal of vehement desire manifested not to have this section reconsidered. It does not provide any payment for this property. The registration of this species of property by the people of Maryland, or a provision in the constitution that the legislature shall provide for the registration of this species of property, does not look to any payment upon the part of the State.

And what right has this convention to designate this species of property that has been lost, to the exclusion of hundreds of