

take the black man because he is black; you will take the white man because he is white. There is to be no other criterion of the governing class but the color. Suppose there is some sense in that. How does it happen to be the case that the whites are the governing class? We have had, not only here and now, but years past through every abolition avenue, preached to us the natural equality of the negro; that Almighty God made him equal to the white. The gentleman from Cecil (Mr. Pugh) is under great misapprehension when he says the negro is nowhere permitted to vote and to participate in the government. The negro votes in the free States just as well as he or I do here. I take that back; just as well as he does, for I cannot vote sometimes when I go to the polls, without meeting a great many difficulties that the negro in New York and Massachusetts does not encounter. They not only vote there, but they hold office.

Why do not they do it here? You are great friends to the negro up to a certain point. As far as the master is concerned, the negro is everything. As one of them, in quite an eloquent speech in our town, said to his comrade: "It is our day now; the white man is nothing." That speech was made there with more truth, I am sorry to say, than I ever expected it would have. You first disfranchise them; you first prohibit to them any agency in the government, and then say they shall not vote because they are proscribed.

You say the whites shall be represented; you put the word "white" there; that proscribes the negro, nothing else. Is that argument sound which first—not according to my theory, but according to the theory of these abolitionists—commits an offence, and then, because that offence is committed, punishes the offended? So much for that argument.

Now for the amendment. I say the proposition of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) will meet my approbation. It is the sound, true, and only correct democratic doctrine, if we are to go for democratic administration. If gentlemen desire to carry out what they profess, that is the only mode in which to do it.

The plan I proposed in the last convention was to district the city of Baltimore alone upon a principle which has been stated, that if a man in Baltimore can vote for twenty representatives, while I can vote for but two, he has ten times the privilege I have. That is therefore inequality, and inequality is injustice. My plan was to district the city of Baltimore alone. Some of the ablest men in the last convention advocated districting the whole State. And a map was actually made, as members will find by reference to the proceedings, and exhibited in that convention, and a very able discussion was had upon that subject. However, I cannot refer

to that matter very fully, for I am circumscribed in regard to debate to a very few minutes.

While I say this, I say that exceptions should be made. It is very just to say that all general rules will produce hardships somewhere. But there is a misapplication of this doctrine. When a law is passed in advance and in general terms, it may well be expected that cases will subsequently arise which, not being exactly within the letter of the remedy, or not being exactly within the language of the prohibition, will either escape the remedy or meet with unmerited punishment. But that is not our case here. The case now exists; you have now the question before you; all of you have it. Where a county approaches within so very small a number of the required ratio, it ought not to be excluded.

Gentlemen tell us that in ten, or twelve, or fourteen years, this will be remedied. Why impose this hardship upon us in the meantime? You have the power; the remedy is in your hands; why not apply it? If this general law was passed at a time when you did not know what proportion the different counties would have to the standard, there might be some reason why a county should suffer. But you know beforehand; it is now perfectly palpable; why therefore inflict the hardship?

Believing that this position cannot possibly be controverted, that the convention will not intentionally inflict a hardship because there may be a remedy ten years hence, I shall at the proper time move to except the counties that come near the limit of the ratio of representation; Kent county, particularly. In the case of a county like my own, within one or two hundred of the necessary amount of population, why should we be so reduced?

Gentlemen talk about a general rule. You never have had, and never will have, a general rule without exceptions. Does this proposition before you go upon the ground of representation exactly according to population? No, sir. That never has been done, and I do not think it ever will be done. I do not think the counties of Allegany, Washington, Frederick, and the larger counties—I am sure the smaller counties never will—will ever agree that Baltimore shall have a representation exactly according to population; composed, as that population is to a large extent, of individuals having no earthly interest in the government; men who are perfect strangers to the government; who are incapable of understanding its theory or operation; they will never consent that those persons shall be represented, every individual head of them, while thousands of those in the counties are unrepresented.

And another reason for that which has always been operative, and the influence of