

an article was introduced into the Constitution by a unanimous vote, *nemine contradicente*, not one solitary voice raised against it, that the Legislature should not interfere with the relation of master and slave in the State of Maryland. The men of that Convention were great men, were good men, were men of whom the State of Maryland may justly be proud; and their names will be handed down to posterity as bright stars in the galaxy of the good old State of Maryland. Were they not conscientious men? were they not just men? were they not men disposed to serve their God as humbly and as faithfully as the latter day saints that surround us now?

I will not argue this view of the question, because the arguing of it would admit that there had been a change, which I do not believe. And I cannot believe that the gentlemen who dissent from me, and oppose the institution of slavery, themselves believe that there has been such a radical change in the minds of the people upon this point.

But it is argued that slavery is immoral in its nature and in its tendency; that it is demoralizing to both races; that it is cruel, inhuman, monstrous in its character, and that it affects injuriously the material interests of the State of Maryland. We answer that it is none of these. Slavery has done more to improve, and elevate, and make comfortable, and to christianize the African than all the abolition societies, all the emigrant aid societies, and all the so-called benevolent institutions of abolitionism combined. The four millions slaves of the Southern States are the happiest, the most elevated in the scale of civilization, the most comfortable in their physical, moral and mental condition, of any of their race that exist upon the face of the earth, or that ever did exist.

Now, I intend to try and prove this position by a reference to the statistics of the United States, as they are exhibited in the census of 1860. I have noticed how studiously—perhaps I should not say studiously, but it seemed to be so—gentlemen who have argued this question upon this floor have avoided any references to the statistics of the United States pertaining to slavery. They have not attempted to bolster up their assertions of the enormities of slavery, by one solitary reference, so far as it came to my hearing, to the statistics of the census. It is charged that slavery is immoral, that it has a demoralizing effect upon the negro, and also upon the white race. Now, the statistics of the United States show, taking the aggregate of all the population, that in the slaveholding States there is not quite one negro convict to 10,000 of the population, while in the free States the negro convicts average about 29 to 10,000 of the population. And still we are told that slavery has a demoralizing effect upon the negro; that it debases him, degrades him, and makes him vicious.

Still here is the bold fact presented in the statistics, which no man can gainsay, that in the free States of the North there are twenty-nine negro convicts where there is one negro convict in the slave States of the South. Is there no force in that argument?

And again; and I would not advert to it, but it has been adverted to before, a fling has been made at the demoralizing tendency of the institution of slavery upon the morals of the two races in the Southern States, which is attested by the large number of mulattoes in the South. The gentleman (Mr. Valliant) who first attempted that argument, certainly reckoned without ever looking at the book. He surely did not speak from the book, when he made that assertion. Why, sir, in the Southern States there are only about one mulatto to eight negroes; while in the Northern States there are more mulattoes than negroes. In many of them the mulattoes constitute seventy-five per cent. of the colored population. And in all of them it will average over fifty per cent., as I have stated. But I am not disposed to lay this as a sin at their door at all, for it is from that section of country that we hear the delectable doctrine of miscegenation preached, and they but practice what they preach. And thus they preserve that inestimable jewel consistency embodied in a yellow casket though not a golden one.

Next, slavery is cruel, inhumane and monstrous. Now, if the lot of the slave is so deplorable as it is represented to be, if the slaves of this country are in a condition which imposes burdens upon them which are grievous to be borne, why is it not shown in its results? We have heard this argument of chains, and shackles, and slavery, over and over again. It is a harp of a thousand strings that is played upon incessantly by gentlemen on the other side. Now, if it be true that the slaves "groan and sweat under this weary life," then the statistics showing their physical condition will certainly justify gentlemen in that assertion. Now, I assert as the correct doctrine that that class of people among whom there is the most rapid natural increase, the least mortality, and the greatest longevity, the least want and destitution, and the greatest immunity from the many ills that human flesh is heir to, cannot be inhumanly treated; but on the contrary, their condition must be a prosperous, happy and contented one. I think that all true philanthropists and every student of political economy will admit that that is a true position.

Now, how do those who study political economy and the doctrine of government, judge of the condition of any people, of their prosperity and happiness, and of the benign influences of the government under which they live, except by the statistics that show their physical condition? And the statistics prove that the slave population of the South