

Our own State has colonized only about 1,100 since 1831, the larger part of whom were slaves, set free on condition of going to Africa.

Nor does christianity prosper in a free negro community. Take our own State and Pennsylvania, and you will find that the statistics show a Church membership in Maryland (chiefly slaves) of ten to one in Pennsylvania. We hazard nothing in saying that, the institution of slavery in these United States has christianized more heathens than all the missionary efforts throughout the habitable globe. We venture the assertion, that there are more of the negro race now in Heaven, redeemed by grace while in a state of slavery, than would get there in the next thousand years, if all were set free; and more than are there from all the combined efforts of Missionaries since the Reformation took place. And yet the institution of slavery, the only hope for the redemption of Africa, is held up by many to the gaze of the world, as a moral wrong in the eyes of God. The people of Maryland are of a different opinion; for we find Art. xxi., of the Bill of Rights, that they reserve to your Honorable body, in express terms, the power to "govern, regulate, and dispose" of our free negro population.

This language clearly recognizes an inherent right to legislate for them; and it also indicates the sense of the Convention that framed the Constitution, as to the particular kind of legislation best adapted to their case. The legislature has passed numerous laws to "govern and regulate" them but the "disposing" of them yet remains to be tried. Has that time and necessity come? We think it has.

We do not dictate to your Honorable Body, but we assure you, that the institution of slavery in Maryland depends upon your decisive legislation towards the free negro population. Either they must be expelled from the State, or made slaves, or slavery will soon terminate in Maryland. We lose yearly in runaway slaves, at least \$200,000, and the insecurity of this property forces upon us the necessity of selling them, or removing with them further South. The operation of these causes, unless speedily checked, must ultimately make Maryland a free State.

The ultimate destiny of our free negroes in this State, demands candor and frankness at the hands of our legislature. For we all know, in any event, their stay here is very precarious, and the past temporizing policy of our laws towards them, irritates rather than cures the evil.

We therefore pray your Honorable Body for the passage of a law embracing and disposing of our free negroes under four cardinal heads, as follows: