

With the object of making as certain as possible any prospect of the desired governmental aid, the minority finally succeeded in having passed near the close of the Convention a resolution appointing a committee of seven to visit Washington and request of the President that he recommend to Congress an appropriation for the former slave-owners of Maryland.⁷⁶ The committee was duly appointed but the compensation was never received. It should be mentioned that the majority somewhat lessened any feelings of elation which the so-called "Rebel" slave-owners might feel at the prospect of receiving "Greenbacks" from the Government, by providing that the latter should first take the oath of allegiance before receiving any such sums.⁷⁷

However, the minority were not at all satisfied with this small gain, but continued to use every expedient to perpetuate at least a small part of the former slave-owners' rights. With this object in view they heartily supported the project of the apprenticeship, particularly to their former owners, of negro minors. This subject was, fortunately for them, brought forward by a member of the majority. Mr. Todd of Caroline, with several others of his party, favored such a step, though the larger part of them had been pledged against it as one of the campaign issues,⁷⁸ and opposed it as being either unnecessary under the existing state law for apprenticeship, or else a "concession to the slave power" which practically postponed the emancipation of minor slaves till they became of age.⁷⁹ The minority on the other hand held that apprenticeship would be only a merciful provision for many helpless children, and a small measure of justice to the former owners in giving some return for the previous support of minors during their infancy. Mr. Negley and Mr. Purnell were two of the Union members who held these views.⁸⁰ The

⁷⁶ Proc., 713-5.

⁷⁷ Proc., 719, 771-2.

⁷⁸ See page 32.

⁷⁹ Deb., iii, 1577, et seq.

⁸⁰ Deb., iii, 1583, 1591-2.