

has the appearance of being peculiarly and specially a part of our *individuality*. It is only another form of *selfishness* which, differently expressed, we all condemn.

And, sir, I maintain that this is another dangerous anti-American idea, and one that is the necessary accompaniment of the institution of slavery, is more universally diffused throughout the slaveholding States than elsewhere in this country, and, sir, it has been unhesitatingly urged in this debate by the gentleman from St. Mary's (Mr. Billingsley.)

With slaveholders, doubtless, it is more firmly rooted, because right at the outset they commence by indorsing the idea that one man can be so far superior to another as to *own* him, designate him as his property, and do with him all that the word signifies. Will not gentlemen see the injury done to the master himself by this relation? He is thus at once made a despot in spite of himself; hence must follow all the ills of despotism to the despot himself, a blunting of his natural feelings, a restiveness under any kind of restraint.

Now, I wish to give some illustrations of the effects of this system upon the feelings of those who are surrounded by its influence, and while I admit the unusual and universal hospitality of the Southern people, yet in all directions touching this institution, their feelings are blunted or depraved to a degree beyond conception, and they are not probably aware of it.

In Virginia, I once had a full conversation with one who was a perfect gentleman, and who was an intimate friend of mine, who was in all respects a good man and a good citizen; sociable, hospitable and kind, who would do any man a favor just as soon as the best of men. I had a conversation with him in regard to his operations. In his early youth, associated with a connexion of his, he used to travel down to Richmond with negroes, little and big, which he took there to sell. I asked him whether he did not frequently separate families; whether he did not frequently take off the wife or the husband and leave the child at home, or take away the child, or separate the husband and wife; and I asked him, did not you, with your feelings, have a great deal of hesitancy in engaging in that kind of business? He said to me, calmly and honestly, "At first, I tell you what it is, it was just the hardest thing I ever went through, but I soon got used to their squalling, and latterly I did not notice it at all." He could bear their "squalling," as he termed it, without any feeling whatever.

I have some other matters of personal experience and intended to relate them, but will not detain the Convention, to show how the tendency of these things is to blunt the feelings. But do gentlemen never reflect that

abolitionists are frequently made in this way in an instant? I think I was made one very quickly in Richmond. The gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Cushing) referred the other day to the Boston fugitive slave case, and said he was then a pro-slavery man; but it is my candid opinion that he became then and there an abolitionist. And now let me read the testimony of General Richard J. Oglesby, another slaveholder, the Union candidate for Governor of Illinois:

"May I indulge myself for a moment to give you a few of the reasons why I became an anti-slavery man? [Yes, yes.] I know that what affects the character of any one man in the country is of but little consequence; still, it was a big thing with me, and controlled all the future thoughts of my life—made me honest on the question—made me purely honest. My father was a slaveholder; he had a wife and eight children, and only one negro—[laughter]—and identified himself with the institution of slavery. He was a Virginian born, living in Kentucky, a cooper by trade. A negro fell to his lot somehow, with other things, from his father's estate. He took that negro, learned him the carpenter's trade, he lived in the family, while all the children were being born he nursed us, took care of us, led us along by the hand, and father (so I am told and I believe it's true) never gave him a lash or lick or any unkind word. [Applause.] He was one of the noblest black men I have ever seen. After a while, in the course of events, my parents died and left us poor—very poor. I was eight years old. I saw that negro put upon the stand and sold off at auction. That did not concern me very much. I scarcely knew what it meant. I saw those who were my friends—whom I loved dearly, and still love—I saw them about it, and supposed as a boy that it was all right. That negro came often to see us, as he was taken away only eight or ten miles. He was then forty years of age. Shortly afterwards, a son of the purchaser, in the wrath and fire of the moment, exposed his old bare back and gave him one hundred deliberate lashes. The news came to us children through my married sister, that sad story of how old Uncle Tim had been treated. Something settled hold of me then, young as I was, and I made a resolve, for a boy, of quite a serious character, that if ever in the providence of God I grew up to be worth anything, enough to buy him back to freedom, I would do it. His master, I presume, was as kind as they generally are. It is not the owner of a slave I am abusing, but the institution. I am striving at something higher than a man—the system. Time passed on and I remained poor. Finally, California became the rage, and I went there. I got together money enough to come back home and go to Kentucky. I kept my promise; I bought him and set him free, and