

sel from the traitor who conspires to secure that ruin?

All I ask is that when the gentleman's argument goes to the white people of the State his authority shall go with it. However, the gentleman had no other recourse. There is no authority for the statement save only in the interest of the spirit of slavery.

Now, what is the statement? That when the slaves are freed they will flock North or into this State from the South, and their labor will be brought immediately into competition with white labor; and as applied to this State, they will flock into the Northern counties and the competition will occur there. That is to say, when the slaves are freed all labor in the districts of country where slavery existed will at once and forever cease. The planter will gaze placidly forth upon his untilled lands, and it is to be hoped will learn wisdom from the contemplation. The mill will cease to grind its accustomed grist, and the stream unchecked will run smoothly on to the sea. The morning sun will be heralded by the hum of industry no more forever, and the evening come serenely down upon a landscape stagnate with repose. This is not my picture, it is theirs, and they may profit by it until they have learned the following lesson, to wit:

Wherever there is land to be tilled the laborer will be there to till it; that there are not now enough laborers for the work to be performed; that it will *pay* the planters of the South better to keep the laborers that they have, than to hunt for others that they *cannot get*; that the natural affection of the negro for the place of his birth is proverbial, and so far as he is concerned will not permit him to leave it of his own volition; that if they—the planters—wish to drive them away, other people will buy the land deserted for the want of labor, and bring the laborers back to it.

In a country like ours it is simple nonsense to talk about even the possibility of distress or permanent inconvenience from competition in labor. Temporary inconveniences from temporary causes may and do occur, but they even almost universally occur in the more intellectual fields of labor to which it is not expected that the negro race will or can aspire. My only reason for noticing this argument at all is that it seems to be used with so much earnestness by the opposition as to almost demand an answer.

The gentleman from Charles (Mr. Edelen) repeats the complaint of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) on a former occasion, and appeals to us in piteous tones to behold the swarms of free negroes about Washington.

Do the gentlemen forget that there is a war of huge proportions raging in this country? and that there are some things called incidents connected with all wars? Do they expect a war to be altogether an amiable performance, and to be attended with no little

inconveniences? Do they *regret* that these poor fugitives have at last found a haven? that hunted and hounded from the earliest period of their existence they might once at least before they die realize the truth that God reigns and is just?

I know it is a wonderful page in our record. For generations past the cold North star was the only index to the slave, hopelessly bound, of some dream-land of freedom away in the icy region towards which it was the guide; but never before in all their dreary lives was there a haven near at hand. To the Athenian slave there were the temples of Eumenides and of Theseus into which the master dare not follow him. Cannot the gentlemen rejoice with me that there is at least one haven of rest for these fugitives from the lash? a Paradise to them? I commend to the gentlemen a more careful avoidance of this trifling with sacred words. It may, indeed, be to these wanderers a foretaste of eternity. God knows, and He only!

The spirit of hatred against the race and which extends to all the opponents of the system of slavery, is as much to be deprecated as any other development of the institution; and this leads me to some inquiry into the causes of that spirit and the nature and character of its expression. It is founded, in my judgment, in the improperly cultivated *pride* of our nature, and was manifested in all times. It has been the source of more evils to the human family than probably any other one cause. I allude to the idea that some men are *born* superior to others—that idea, the tendency of which has always been to create a *privileged* class; that teaches the doctrine that some men are better, higher in the scale of being, by reason of their *birth alone*; that some are at once illustrious because their ancestors were illustrious.

Now, sir, I stand here as a plebian in this fight. In the readings of my boyhood, I always took sides with the plebians against the patricians; suffered with them in their sufferings; resented with them the indignities offered to their class by their assumed superiors; followed them in the wars of the Roundheads against the Cavaliers, and joined them in their death cry against Charles I, the crowned representative of their oppressors, and the stricken and defeated exemplar of their vindication.

I know and have felt the charm that attaches to the idea. It is the first impulse of our nature to pride ourselves more upon that which we inherit, or have through no effort of our own, than upon that which we acquire. We defer to genius rather than to cultivated talent, and pride ourselves more upon what we know by intuition than upon that which we demonstrate by reasoning. It is the savor of labor that offends us; and we rejoice in the possession of that which