

trustee, as his duty called on him to do, as a member of the bar, but his "moral sense" to-day so wonderfully acute, did not then revolt at the performance of such a duty.

Sir, men's perceptions of right and wrong are much more acute to-day than they were but a few years ago. Their moral perceptions are clearer, and their senses are preternaturally bright. I will not say that "I am shocked," but I will say that "I am astonished at the principles expressed." In the great, new-born anti-slavery zeal of the gentleman from Baltimore (Mr. Daniel,) whose conscience, "as a Christian" is so sorely troubled because of the existence of slavery, he has not only denounced the institution of slavery in most unmeasured terms; but has actually exalted those of the negroes who are in the army above the great mass of the white soldiers. Surely the gentleman did not well consider what he was saying. Surely he did not consider the import of the words he was uttering. Surely he did not mean what he said, when quoting the declarations of two returned soldiers, he said "the negro troops were among the very best of Grant's army." And it seemed to be with a sense of gratified glorification that he made the announcement. Now, sir, can this be so? Is it true that the negro troops are "among the very best in Grant's army?"

Mr. DANIEL, (in his seat.) No, sir.

Mr. DENNIS. Then why did the gentleman so state? I believe that the great mass of the people who have gone forth grasping the banner of their country, are prompted by good motives. I believe that they are imperilling their lives and liberties to maintain, as they believe, the Union. Whether such an end is likely to be the result of their efforts is another question; but such I believe to be the motive that prompts the great majority. And yet the gentleman stands up in this Hall and tells us that these men, thus leaving homes, wives, children, family, friends and all that constitutes home, and going forth to brave death in a hundred forms in the defence of their country, are inferior and poorer soldiers than these negro troops. I leave the statement for the consideration of the country.

In the brief reply I shall make to the gentleman, I shall reverse the course of his argument, and first reply to his last argument.

We, the minority of this Convention, who oppose his views, are very gravely and considerably informed by the gentleman that "we stand some risk of not getting any compensation for our negroes," &c. Now, sir, the negroes may go. If the government chooses to take my negroes it can do so. I cannot help it. Government has the power. If it can make anything out of them, be it so. But I tell that gentleman, and every other gentleman who entertains his notions, and who thinks that our course is to be influenced

by such paltry threats, in the language of the immortal Reed, whom, in the days of the Revolution, the British emissary attempted to bribe, "I am poor, very poor; but poor as I am, the King of England cannot bribe me."

The gentleman says "that the President's proclamation failed to have its effect." The answer to that may be given in the words of the President himself, when he said "he had very little influence with this administration." I believe that is true. Who, but the veriest dolt, ever believed that anything but abolition was the end, aim, and purpose of this administration? It may be that in the beginning of this unhappy controversy the President never contemplated or comprehended the results of his measures. He may have meant what he said in his proclamation. But "there is a power behind the throne, greater than the throne itself," and the President has indeed "very little influence with this administration." If not at first upon the platform of emancipation he has been placed upon it, and if he had the disposition, he is powerless to resist.

Amongst other reasons the gentleman now urges in favor of emancipation in this State is, that no negro can be a witness in any case where a white is a party, and he denounces that law as "hard, grievous, oppressive, intolerable, and unjust in its character;" and has declared that for this reason alone, "he would blot out this institution of slavery." The gentleman has more than once been a member of the legislature, and if he ever made an effort to alter that law, I am ignorant of it; and does not the gentleman know that until the past winter a person was incompetent to testify in a suit if interested to the extent of one cent? And is not this law quite as grievous as the one excluding the negro? That received not a word of condemnation, but the negro's case is quite sufficient cause for "blotting out the institution of slavery."

He says that "it has never been taxed like other property;" "that it has been a favored institution," &c. If the owners of slaves are paid the sum at which they have been taxed for said slaves, I venture to say there will be no complaint upon that score.

But he says that "he is a member of the Methodist church, and that after all the great objection to slavery is its moral aspect," &c. That "we must do unto others as we would that they should do unto us;" "that in the times of ignorance God winked at it, but now he commands all men to repent," &c.

And the gentleman then says that there was no slavery beyond the year of jubilee, under the Jewish dispensation, &c. Now, sir, I have never been a member of the Methodist church, but I will read for the benefit of the gentleman from Baltimore city (Mr. Daniel) these words, from Leviticus, chapter 25, verse 39 to 46, inclusive: