

he son of the law he properly belonged, that had he been a citizen of Massachusetts, he would have resisted the soldiery, if his life had paid the forfeit. Had I been by the man, were he my own brother, who raised his arm to resist the performance of the duty which was enjoined and devolved upon those 1,500 soldiers by a mandate of the President of the United States, carrying out the law of the land, I would have struck him down. I would be consistent; for the very thing I, as a member of the Union party, am condemning, is rebellion against the laws of the land, for which I am ready to strike down every man who does rebel against the government of the United States. So I would have struck him down, if he had been my brother, and had attempted to impede the law in its just and proper course.

The people of Prince George's look upon the attempt to take away our slave property as an outrage. I desire to read a short lesson to my friends. Thus far I believe I have not quoted any authorities. I will now read this from *Nile's Register*, January 14, 1832, vol. 41, page 869, taken from the *Richmond Enquirer*:

"The two great subjects before the committee are those which relate to the colored population of this State, and to its internal improvements. Upon neither of these is the committee yet prepared to report."

"It is probable, from what we hear, that the Committee on the Colored Population will report some plan for getting rid of the free people of color. But is this all that can be done? Are we forever to suffer the greatest evil which can scourge our land, not only to remain, but to increase in its dimensions? 'We may shut our eyes and avert our faces, if we please,' (writes an eloquent South Carolinian, on his return from the North a few weeks ago,) 'but there it is, the dark and growing evil, at our doors; and meet the question we must, at no distant day. God only knows what it is the part of wise men to do on that momentous and appalling subject.' Of this I am very sure, that the difference—nothing short of frightful—between all that exists on one side of the Potomac, and all on the other, is owing to that cause alone. The disease is deep-seated—it is at the heart's core—it is consuming, and has all along been consuming our vitals; and I would laugh, if I could laugh, on such a subject, at the ignorance and folly of the politician, who ascribes that to an act of the government which is the inevitable effect of the eternal laws of nature. What is to be done. Oh! my God—I don't know, but something must be done."

"Yes—something must be done—and it is the part of no honest man to deny it—of no free press to affect to conceal it. When this dark population is growing upon us; when every new census is but gathering its appalling numbers upon us; when within a period

equal to that in which this Federal Constitution has been in existence, those numbers will increase to more than 2,000,000 within Virginia; when our sister States are closing their doors upon our blacks for sale, and when our whites are moving westwardly in greater numbers than we like to hear of. When this, the fairest land on all this continent, for soil and climate, and situation combined, might become a sort of garden spot, if it were worked by the hands of white men alone. Can we, ought we, to sit quietly down, fold our arms, and say to each other, 'Well, well; this thing will not come to the worst in our day. We will leave it to our children and our grand-children, and great-grand-children, to take care of themselves—and to brave the storm?' Is this to act like wise men? Heaven knows! we are no fanatics—we detest the madness which actuated the *Amis des Noirs*. But something ought to be done. Means, sure, but gradual, systematic, but discrete, ought to be adopted, for reducing the mass of evil, which is pressing upon the South, and will still more press upon her, the longer it is put off. We ought not to shut our eyes, nor avert our faces. And though we speak almost without a hope, that the Committee on the Legislature will do anything, at the present session, to meet this question, yet we say now in the utmost sincerity of our hearts, that our wisest men cannot give too much of their attention to this subject—nor can they give it too soon."

One word more, and I will close. My friends on the opposite side have harped on the expression "take away" their slaves. The people of Prince George's look upon the attempt to "take away" their slave property, as an outrage. We have met here, sent by the people, to frame a new Constitution to govern this State; not to make it: we do not make the Constitution, but frame it; and report it to the people, and when the people act upon it favorably, it is they who make the Constitution and not we. If the people, who have given us the right to hold slaves, and who have tolerated this institution so long within the borders and confines of this State, choose to say that it shall exist no longer, it is for the people to say so, and not for this Convention.

Mr. President, I thank the Convention for their patience and great courtesy in granting me an unlimited extension of time.

Mr. CLARK. I desire to say one word in personal explanation, to accompany the remarks of the gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. Berry). The gentleman remarks that in the remarks I made the other day, I charged the Union party with not being satisfied until they had the blood of the opposition. I will simply read from the manuscript from which I then read, to show what I did say: