of the kind, and that its efforts would be most oppressive, harassing and calamitous.

So much for the *present* evil resulting from our colored population.—Another ground for extreme action put forth, is, the prospective condition of Maryland, with a proportional increase of her colored population. Of this we need have little fear. As a class, they are, have been, and ever will be, in contact with the Anglo-Saxon race, subservient: little matter whatever may be the proportions. Connected, as we are, with other States of the Union, both North and South, with whom we strongly assimilate, 'tis absurd to apprehend any political or social injury, even from a material increase of the negro race. But any great proportional increase, we repeat, is not to be apprehended, and it is only the present evil for which legislation can with any plausibility be proposed.

And what kind of legislation is proposed to relieve the community from the evils arising from the presence of an indolent and improvident people? There appears to be several classes of bills before the Legislature, more or less stringent, but we believe, all tending to their increased degradation, and their ultimate re-enslavement, them and their issue. Some provisions perhaps, not going to the ultimate result immediately, but opening the way for its future consummation.

We are not disposed to characterize the bills by epithets, as monstrous, inhuman, barbarous and the like, but in all candor, we do think a legalized renewal of the African slave trade, would be humane in comparison. In that, a barbarous people are *reduced* to civilization and Christianity, although in a severe school, in which, some affect to see the Providence of God; but here, a God-fearing, Christian, orderly, civilized people, a mixed race, of the Anglo-Saxon and African, enjoying under our constitution and laws, certain rights and privileges, obtained often by years of persevering industry under kind masters, or through the beneficence of others, by deeds of manumission, are to be deprived of the personal, legal rights, thus obtained, their property to be wrested from them, their social and religious privileges to be abolished, and finally, in despair, forced either to flee the land of their birth or to choose a master, whose heirs and assigns, they and their children shall serve as slaves in perpetuity.

Is Maryland prepared to open the slavery discussion in its most offensive, most objectionable form? Is not the State at rest on this question, and has it not been so during the many past years of excitement in neighboring States, both North and South? Is not Maryland loyal to the South, and has she not unequivocally so declared herself again and again, even during the present session of her Legislature? But who can predict the result of the legislation proposed? Certainly not peace, not the unanimity of the present and the past.

Any such legislation too is in direct contradiction to her long established policy. Her appropriation for colonization purposes, during a period of near thirty years, declares her conviction of the *manhood* of the African, and has tended to his improvement, and not degradation. The success attending the policy of the State, whatever

else it may have failed in, has proved the capacity of the black man for *self-government* and *self-support*. And the Republic of which Maryland in Liberia forms a part, even now gives a surer guarantee of permanency than our boasted Free Government, founded under the most favorable auspices of any nation under Heaven—and the part that Maryland has taken in building up that African Republic, has added a lustre to her name, that nothing, but legislation like that now proposed, could tarnish.

As the various bills before the House of Delegates now in progress of passage have not been printed in full, we are ignorant of many of their provisions, but the most prominent points, made public through the daily press call for a few special remarks. As before stated, the ultimate aim seems to be re-enslavement of those now free; and the absurd and hypocritical manner in which it is expressed, adds insult to injury. Provision is made for the renunciation of freedom and *voluntary* return to slavery. As if a case could be supposed of a voluntary renunciation of freedom, once enjoyed, and choosing a master. True, there are cases where servants desire to return to the protection of kind masters and homes, to which they have been attached from birth; but the seeking a *new* master, by a free man, is quite another matter. It must be intended to harass them till freedom—*such* freedom—and even life itself—will be no longer desirable. On the trial of Colonel Counselman and son, of Clarke County, Va., for the murder of a slave, it appeared in evidence, that the man was chained by his neck to a beam in a warehouse, and flogged, at intervals, during the day. On re-visiting him at nightfall, either for his release or renewal of torture, he was found dead—dead from hanging; his knees being bent to keep his feet from the floor. The jury gave a verdict of *not guilty*, as the man killed himself by contracting his legs. The act, and result of the trial caused a shudder of horror and disgust throughout the entire valley of Virginia. And shall we emulate the Counselmans, by haling and harassing these people, till freedom becomes burdensome, and then allow them *the privilege of choosing a master?*

All negroes, who have been tried and found guilty of certain offences and sentenced to the penitentiary according to law, no matter how long time served or to serve, or for what crime committed, are to be sold as slaves for life. How just! Not twice "put in jeopardy of life and limb," but twice suffering penalties most disproportional to the offence.

We notice the presenter of the *first class bills*, felicitates himself upon the fact, that by the act of 1857 and '58, the number of our convicts have materially lessened. We will add one fact to increase his satisfaction, which we have from one of the most respectable gentlemen in Maryland. In pursuance of that act, a negro was sold for some petty offence, and was bid off for a small sum, less than ten dollars. The bidder sold the man to go South, for $1,000! No redress. "As a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth."

One provision of the proposed Acts strikes us not particularly complimentary to the slave-holders. It virtually holds this language: "You

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The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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2. June 1841 (n.s. I, 1)--May 1861 (n.s. X, 24)

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