

was a law student in the City of Montreal, the existence of slavery was a very acute question in the American Union. When the thirteen colonies separated from Great Britain, slavery, which was concentrated in the southernmost states of the Union, was legal. Six of the original thirteen states of the American Union were slave owners. George Washington, one of the greatest men of history, and a man of unblemished character, was a slave owner. Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, and who penned the sentence that all men are equal, was a slave owner, and many of the Fathers of the American Union were slave owners. It is the plain truth of history that amongst these men there was no sympathy for slavery; they were all averse to it, and if they could have had their own way, they would have extirpated it from the Constitution, but public opinion would not allow it. When the Fathers of the American Constitution met at Philadelphia to frame an Act of Union, if they had attempted to strike out slavery from the Constitution, union would not have taken place; the Southern States would not have come into it. So the Fathers closed their eyes upon the question of slavery. They expected, however, that public opinion would move and would extinguish it, and they placed their hopes in the Article in the Constitution which declares:

"The migration or importation of such persons as any
"of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall
"not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the year one
"thousand, eight hundred and eight."

The word "slavery" or "slave" was not inserted. They would not pollute such a noble instrument with such words as "slavery" or "slave", but it was slavery which they meant under the word "migration." They expected that, in the course of time, public opinion would move, and they were right in that opinion. Public opinion did move, but it moved in different directions; in the northern States the sentiment grew fierce against the curse and the shame of such an institution. In the South, on the contrary, the impression grew in favor of slavery, from the supposition that African