

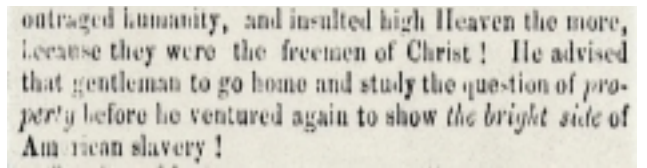
Dr. Pennington said he was not personally acquainted with the churches referred to, but knew other churches of the same character, and he could aver in the presence of this meeting, and prove his averments, that the building of the places of worship, the support of Divine ordinances and respectability and intelligence of the congregations, all lay upon, and centered in, the *free* coloured people.

The slaves could have no property in those churches, nor in anything else, according to American law—they were the churches of the free coloured population. Slaves, he was happy to say, were to be found in them, but to say that such churches were composed of slaves, would be a gross misrepresentation. This he declared from his own knowledge; and he could not doubt that the churches, of which the gentleman had spoken, were of a similar character. But the question was not as to the degree of comfort here and there possessed by slaves—it was not, how well are they clothed here, and fed there—but are they their own or their master's property—are they men and women, or things, goods, and chattels, in American law? A family might be well under a master, he might die, he might fail in business, and to-morrow that family might be sold at the auction block, and husband and wife, parents and children be torn from each other's embrace, never more to meet in this world. But were all just as his American friend had represented, it exhibited after all no bright side, for assuredly slavery had none—it was dark throughout. There were congregations of Christians, admitted to be Christian churches, the followers of Christ, and yet other professed Christians claimed the right to own them, and dispose of them as goods and chattels! The people of God claiming the right to enslave their brethren in Christ, whom he had made free! It was a crime that

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September 26, 1850
Pennington, [J.W.C.]
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