

XXXIXTH CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION.

SENATE.—The proposed amendment to the Constitution was taken up.

Mr. Henderson resumed the floor in continuation of his remarks commenced yesterday. He contended against the taxation of negroes, if they were not to be represented, as an unjust principle, and endorsed the amendment of Mr. Sumner, offered yesterday, to exempt from taxation negroes not represented. The proposition of the committee, he said, was a proposition saying that the Southern States might exclude the negroes from the right of suffrage. This he characterized as a compromise. He did not believe Mr. Fessenden was really in favor of any such proposition, and he would like to see him come out from the Committee of Fifteen and speak his sentiments.

Mr. Fessenden—My friend speaks as if I disapproved of the action of the committee. I do not. If I recently took the liberty to say what I should prefer if it could be done, I did not undertake to say that, under the circumstances, it would be wise to do so. Mr. Henderson said that the negro would not receive justice from the white people of the South. They would be defrauded in every way of their civil and political rights. Under the proposition of the committee, in the States of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, the negro would be excluded from representation, which would be a number nearly equal to the white population. The States of Kansas, Delaware, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa, which were excluded from representation, would be a number nearly equal to the white population. The negro population of Georgia and South Carolina, according to the census of 1850, was less than the white population of New Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode Island, which States have six Senators and eight Representatives. Add the negro population of Virginia, and you have a larger number than the white people of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont and Rhode Island.

Mr. Henderson said he advocated the enfranchisement of the negro, and that he would support a bill authorizing the Postmaster General, when the public service shall require, and until the 30th of June, 1868, to deposit postage stamps with such persons as he may select, for sale and circulation, as may be directed by the Postmaster General. Compensation not exceeding five per cent. to be allowed. The persons so selected are to give bond and security to the amount of the penalties already provided for by law.

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