

members of this Convention from doing what was right and proper in this matter. It is an imputation on the common sense of the constituency of Maryland when it is asserted that they will be degraded by the incorporation into the constitution of a plain principle of jurisprudence. At the present time one-fifth of the population of Maryland are black. We are asked to trust to these people in our ordinary, everyday dealings, and we know that many of them are as much entitled to credence as the whitest Caucasian who ever put his foot on this free soil, and why, then, should this matter be opposed from false pride? The doors of testimony had been flung wide open, and every means had been resorted to to obtain the truth—all possible restrictions on the right of testimony had been removed, and it was for the benefit of society that this last restriction should be swept away. Why should any man feel lowered by an association on the witness stand with a negro? The respectability of any man must be very meagre indeed if it could be affected by that! His patent of nobility was but a flimsy texture, and should be torn from him. [Applause on the floor and in the lobbies, which was suppressed by the Chair.]

Before Mr. Merrick had concluded his time expired, and the hammer of the President fell.

Mr. Groome moved that the gentleman from Howard county be allowed to proceed.

Mr. Brewer, of Baltimore city, objected, and Mr. Merrick declined to conclude his remarks.

Mr. Ritchie said the gentleman from Howard county, (Mr. Merrick,) had on several occasions raised his eloquent voice against subjects being considered by the Convention which properly belonged to the Legislature, and why should he advocate the insertion of this?

Mr. Merrick said, for the simple reason that the last Legislature of Maryland had been derelict in its duty?

Mr. Nelson asked if the Legislature did not represent the sentiments of the people.

Mr. Merrick said, theoretically they might, but practically they did not.

Mr. Ritchie was in favor of giving the right of testi-