

ered, I read "that freedom of speech and debate or proceedings in the Legislature ought not to be impeached in any court of judicature." I cannot understand why my friend from Cecil, after the elaborate speech of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) yesterday, on questions of such vital importance and moment to us, should attempt to abridge those who may follow in his argument, and give to him a greater privilege than that which is allowed to us. If it takes a month for us to answer that, let us do it, and do it well. If we have not the mental ability in this Convention to answer such arguments, if they were arguments, as were adduced yesterday, let us then put our fingers on our mouths and move to restrict debate, because we are afraid to meet them. I have no fear about the ability of the Convention not only to meet, but utterly annihilate, the doctrines which were yesterday espoused upon this floor. Some of us may not perhaps be able to come directly to points, and will have to work our way there. It may be sixty minutes perhaps before some of us can get there. But I trust when we do get there it will be with such a broadside as will sweep it out of the hearing of this Convention or the people of Maryland. I want, under this very section which we have adopted, the greatest latitude given to debate, as to time and gentlemanly expression, upon the floor of this Convention. I shall, therefore, certainly vote against both the amendment and the order.

Mr. SCOTT. I had no idea when I introduced this order that it would lead to so much debate, or I should certainly not have offered it. But since it is before us, and we must dispose of it the best way we can, and as I was the author of the order, perhaps it is due to me and the Convention that I should say something in explanation of it. And first, in respect to the gentleman from Somerset (Mr. Dennis), who begged the Convention to consider that we were composed of mortals. It was in consideration of that fact that I introduced the order; the fact that we are mortals, and that mortal endurance has a limit. If ninety-six men have to speak without limit, where is the endurance that can sustain it?

The gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. Berry) is for freedom of speech, and refers to the article of the bill of rights that the liberty of speech shall not be abridged. Then are we to speak eternally; every man as long as he pleases? Is that the construction? I am glad to find in that gentleman a champion that can annihilate at a blow all the arguments offered yesterday. But if the gentleman can annihilate them at all, he can do it in an hour. If he is an hour in getting to it, he will never get to it. He takes a great deal of credit to himself and his friends' mental ability to meet the opposition. I am glad of that

too. But I want to know whether our physical ability will hold out. A man may have boundless intellectual ability, and yet his physical ability may fail. It is because we are mortals, with limited physical ability, and because I want, and I suppose the rest of us do, to survive these labors and get home, that I offered the order.

Mr. DENNIS. As to the physical ability of the gentleman he can judge of that for himself. He may have felt hungry, or he may have felt thirsty. I do not know his motives. Of course the gentleman will not understand me as meaning anything offensive to him. As to his physical abilities or disabilities he is the best judge of them himself. But as to mental abilities, I will say in reply to the gentleman from Baltimore county (Mr. Berry) that if he staggers under the blow of yesterday, it is only a skirmish. It is but the beginning of the battle. If he staggers under that, let him remember the captain of the old ship in action. When every mast was shot away, and the sails were trailing over the sides, he was called upon to surrender, but replied, "We have only begun the fight."

Mr. SCOTT. I think my motives have been misconceived. It was not out of regard to members of this body who have been so favorably situated as to be listeners, that I offered the order, but out of a humane regard to those gentlemen who are obliged for three hours in succession to entertain this body.

Mr. CLARKE. I assure the gentleman that I have not suffered at all.

Mr. NEGLEY. I am in favor of the amendment of the order; and if that cannot be added, I am in favor of the order as offered. It has been said that this is an invasion of the liberty of speech. Does liberty mean unbridled license? The Chair has announced this morning that no man is allowed to indulge in personal reflection. Our liberty of speech is always to be controlled and exercised in such a way as not to interfere with a like liberty on the part of our neighbors. This is no abridgement of the liberty of speech. It is a limitation upon the time, and not upon the freedom of speaking.

What will be the result if the order is not adopted? A few gentlemen will rise and speak *ad libitum*, and their harangues will go on the record. The physical endurance of the Convention will become so worn out and exhausted, that some one will rise and move the previous question, and all debate will be stopped. All the discuss on come suddenly to a premature close. It is for the purpose of fair play, to give an equal chance to both sides, that I desire the adoption of this rule, or some similar rule. I am in favor of the amendment, because it gives equality of liberty to both sides. It ought not to be objected by the minority that we should not curtail their right of debating the question, because one of their members has already had the privi-