

Mr. Dobbin would reply, in answer to the question of the gentleman from Charles (Mr. Stoddert) that in his opinion, which he thought would be concurred in by every lawyer in the Convention, the retention or striking out of this clause would have no effect whatever, moral or legal, on the claim for indemnity which the late slaveholders have for the wrong committed upon them. It was not that reason which influenced him in the vote which he was about to give. If he had been on the committee which reported the Declaration of Rights, he should not have agreed to place that article in it, but it could do no harm and cannot affect any right of property, and he hoped the Convention would leave it in.

The discussion was further continued by Messrs. Stoddert, Goldsborough of Talbot, and Marbury, in favor of striking out.

Mr. Peters argued at length in favor of striking out, and said he had received a letter from Charles O'Connor agreeing with him (Mr. P.) that slavery had not been lawfully abolished, and the amendment to that effect had no place in the constitution.

Mr. Farnandis did not object to the provision, but to its position. The question of slavery was finally settled, and there is no necessity for this article. He suggested that in lieu of it a clause should be inserted in the constitution proper, prohibiting the Legislature from re-establishing slavery. This would be superfluous, but would do no harm and guard against the anticipated danger of misrepresentation. The same views would govern his vote on the witness question.

Mr. Jones again took the floor and argued eloquently in favor of retaining the clause, as conducing to a good effect upon the public mind of the country.

Mr. Brown said he rose reluctantly to speak on this subject. For himself, he was glad the article had been reported, and that it is placed where it is. He did not see how the committee could do otherwise. They found a similar article in the constitution of 1864, coupled with the wrong inflicted on the State by the manner in which slavery was abolished. He ventured to say, however,