

tent as a witness or juror who believes in the existence of God, and that under His dispensation such person will be held morally accountable for his acts, and be rewarded or punished therefor, either in this world or the world to come; nor shall any person be deemed incompetent as a witness on account of race or color.

Mr. McKaig moved to strike out all after the word "practice" where it first occurs, to the word "nor" in the eighth line, the words proposed to be stricken out being "unless under the color of religion any man shall disturb the good order, peace or safety of the State, or shall infringe the laws of morality, or injure others in their natural, civil or religious rights.

Mr. McKaig argued that the provision as it stood was only toleration, not religious liberty.

Mr. Barry opposed the amendment.

Mr. Jones said the effect of the amendment would be to take away from the Legislature all regulation of the Sabbath and laws of morality.

Mr. Ford disagreed with the gentleman from Somerset, (Mr. Jones,) and favored the motion to strike out, upon the ground that the rights intended to be declared were properly declared in the preceding part of article 36, and that the Legislature was not restricted from passing any law that might be necessary to preserve the peace of the State against any violation of the same under color of religious freedom.

Mr. Gill argued against striking out. If this were done, then the laws of morality might be infringed, the natural, civil and religious rights of persons injured, and there would be no redress.

Mr. Page was in favor of striking out the words "shall infringe the laws of morality," and called for a division on the question.

Mr. Syester did not suppose the gentleman from Alleghany was serious in making the proposition he did. He then argued at some length against allowing individual consciences to become the judges of the laws of morality, and against taking from the Legislature the right to regulate the laws of morality.