

ance at night sessions, for this one reason. I have a very severe affliction in my family. My wife attends in the day time, and I have to attend a portion of the night at least to relieve her. I would like, therefore, to be excused for some time at least, from attendance at the night sessions of this convention.

Leave of absence was accordingly granted.

THE DRAFT IN MARYLAND.

The convention then took up for consideration the following preamble and resolution, submitted by Mr. MARBURY on the 16th instant.

"Whereas, The citizens of the State of Maryland have been drafted until the draft has reached the home of nearly every able-bodied man in the State; and whereas the slave counties of the State have almost been depopulated of their whole laboring force; and whereas the slaves who have been enticed or voluntarily gone off from this State, and entered the service of the United States, have nearly all of them been accredited to other States, contrary to the laws of the land, and in violation of every principle of justice and right; and whereas, the upper counties of this State have been so entirely laid waste and so depleted of their population that they have scarcely men enough left to protect and support the helpless women and children who are entitled to their care; therefore,

"Resolved, That the members of this convention deem it a duty they owe their constituents, to appoint and do hereby authorize the president of this convention to appoint a committee of five, of whom he (the president) shall be one, to wait on the proper authorities at Washington, explain the condition of our people, request and urge that they be relieved of all further draft during the war."

Mr. MARBURY. I think that the propositions contained in this resolution are so eminently just and proper that it is hardly necessary to say anything in advocacy of them. If I am correctly informed, the State of Maryland has furnished far more troops in proportion to her population than any other State in the Union. It is a well-known fact that in the lower counties of the State, in all the slaveholding counties, there have been recruiting officers for months at a time. Independent of that there have been a great many slaves forced off. A great many have been put into the service without any authority from the federal government. A great many have gone off voluntarily and joined the regiments of other States. We want to find out if possible how many have been taken from the State of Maryland, and by what authority they were taken. I think if we can ascertain these facts, and have the proper credits for the slaves which have voluntarily gone off, the government will see the justice and propriety of our being relieved in the future. In my own county, in

Upper Marlboro', there was an officer there for months at a time recruiting. We supposed he was acting under authority from the government. But afterwards a gentleman from the county who was formerly in the military service himself, went to Washington and made investigations, and found that the recruiting officer had been acting without any authority whatever, and that all the slaves he had taken from the county had been taken without any knowledge of it on the part of the government.

There was General Birney down on the Patuxent river; he certainly acted under authority of the government. He carried off a great many slaves who were mustered into the service, but they were credited to other States. I think we should have some justice done us in this matter. It is necessary that our people should have this thing investigated. If I am correctly informed, our county, that has furnished hundreds, I may say thousands of able-bodied slaves for soldiers, has only been credited for three slaves. Where is the justice of that?

And I think the other branch of the proposition equally demands investigation and remedy, if possible. Certain portions of the State, if I have been correctly informed, have been laid waste, devastated, and the people have been crippled in their means in every possible way. It is impossible for them to support their families, unless they can retain among them the laboring force they now have. Unless the laboring men, the men who have families to take care of can be left at home, the greater portion of the population must be great sufferers. I think that in consideration of all these facts, the proposition that I have made is eminently just and necessary, and one which our constituents demand of us. I confess that it is not exactly within the scope and objects for which this convention was assembled. But certainly it is equally as much within the sphere of our duties as many other propositions which have been presented for our consideration.

Believing as I do that this is a matter in which the people of the whole State from one end to the other take a deep and abiding interest, I feel no hesitation in bringing it before the body as I have done.

Mr. JONES, of Cecil. I offer the following amendment; add to the resolution the words:

"And we will in all other respects sustain the administration to our utmost ability in suppressing this most unholy and wicked rebellion."

THE PRESIDENT. The chair must rule that amendment out of order, as not germane to the proposition under consideration.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. There is more in the resolution offered by my colleague (Mr. Marbury) for the consideration of the convention than upon a cursory view