

a man; and when I do it I take the responsibility of my own actions without regard to the gentleman or his conclusions. I leave the gentleman then with all his accumulated wisdom, and I bid him study Solomon a little more deeply before he brings it again into this Convention.

Mr. ABBOTT. Mr. President—

The PRESIDENT. The Chair will not permit this debate any further. The Chair is admonished by this occurrence of the necessity of requiring gentlemen strictly to observe the parliamentary rule.

Mr. BRISCOE. I desire to suggest that this debate—

The PRESIDENT. Not another solitary word will the Chair permit on this subject. Each gentleman has had a fair opportunity to be heard; and if this personal debate is allowed to proceed further, it is impossible to foresee to what it may lead. When a gentleman thinks his private character has been assailed, the Chair will give him a fair opportunity to be heard within the limits of parliamentary debate; and will permit the gentleman to whom he refers to explain. Beyond that he will not permit any discussion. If the Convention otherwise direct, the Chair will permit the discussion to continue; but in the absence of such instructions, being the conservator of the peace and of the rights and honor of every member, to a certain extent, he regards it as his duty to interpose at this juncture.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. It is very far from my purpose to take any part in this debate, but I wish to say a word or two by way of restoring, I trust, the proper relations between all parties in this house, in requesting the parties immediately concerned that such an arrangement may be made that no part of this debate may appear upon our record. I think in after time gentlemen will regret that such a record should be left. If the gentleman from Baltimore city takes serious exception to the playful allusions to him made by the gentleman from Prince George's in his former speech, I trust that the gentleman from Prince George's will consent that that portion of his remarks may be suppressed, and that this whole matter may be withdrawn.

Mr. BRISCOE. I second that. It was what I intended to suggest.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. I am very certain from my knowledge of the kindly feelings of the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Berry,) I understood that the allusions he made were playful, he having disclaimed any personality, and I supposed they would be taken to be mere badinage—

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman cannot proceed. It is for the determination of the Convention whether this discussion shall be omitted from the debates.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset, moved that this debate be omitted from the record of the debates.

The PRESIDENT. The whole debate, commencing with the remarks of the gentleman from Baltimore city?

Mr. ABBOTT. Leaving upon the record the previous remarks referring to me? I hope not.

Mr. HATCH. I should object to that. I hope this will all be entered upon the journal of debates.

The PRESIDENT. The Chair has no discretion but to put the motion as it is submitted. Does the motion of the gentleman embrace that portion of the remarks before made by the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Berry) to which exception is taken?

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. I stated, sir, at the time, that I did not intend to offend the gentleman. He has made an attack upon me this morning. I deny that I have ever made an attack upon him. I do not mean that my remarks shall be suppressed. I have already stated my position before this Convention, and I hope this Convention will let me as a member of this body exercise that right in that respect which is due to every member here. We have a stenographer to report whatever transpires by way of debate; and I say that as a humble member of this body I have a right if I think proper to have published such remarks at all times as I may submit to this Convention. I hope, therefore, that this right may not be curtailed by any vote of the Convention.

Mr. JONES, of Somerset. If there is any objection upon the part of the gentleman, I withdraw the motion.

Mr. BILLINGSLEY asked and obtained leave of absence.

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS—ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

The Convention proceeded to the consideration of the order of the day, being the second reading of the Declaration of Rights. The next article for consideration was the following, which was read:

Art. 23. "Hereafter, in this State, there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except in punishment of crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted; and all persons held to service or labor, as slaves, are hereby declared free."

Mr. VALLIANT. There may be some impropriety in my opening the debate, inasmuch as I am a member of the majority and coincide in opinion with the committee who reported this article. I should not have attempted to secure the floor this morning, had it not been for the single consideration that my health for the last five or six days has become very much impaired, and I feel the necessity of absenting myself from this convention for a few days for the purpose of placing myself under medical treatment. I therefore desire to say what I have to say now, that it may not be necessary for me to remain here to submit my views at any time hereafter.

When I left my quiet little home on the banks of Miles river for the purpose of meet-