

peals from Baltimore city, are fixed at \$3,500, and of the Associate Judges at \$2,800, "and shall not be diminished" during their continuance in office. In the same way section 31, of Article 4, provides that the salaries of the Judges of the Supreme Bench shall be \$3,500 "which shall not be diminished during their term of office." If these sections stood alone, or if they are to be regarded as the only provisions of the Constitution upon the subject of the salaries of the Judges, it would seem to be very clear not only that there was no prohibition against increasing salaries, but by implication the possibility of an increase was clearly contemplated. But it is supposed that section 35, of Article 3, and section 1, of Article 15, may have some bearing upon this question.

Section 35, of Article 3, provides that "no extra compensation shall be granted or allowed by the General Assembly to any public officer, agent, servant or contractor after the service shall have been rendered, or the contract entered into; nor shall the salary or compensation of any public officer be increased or diminished during his term of office." If this section stood alone and there was nothing said as to the increase or diminution of the salaries of the Judges in the parts of the Constitution relating to such Judges, it might be very strongly argued that their salaries would be governed by this general provision, and could neither be increased nor diminished. But the cardinal rule of statutory construction is that some meaning is, if possible, to be given to every word in the instrument. Now, if this section 35 includes salaries of Judges, then the words in those sections relating to Judges specially, that their salaries shall not be "*diminished*," would mean absolutely nothing. No such construction is to be given to any instrument as to make its several parts self contradictory. If then, this prohibition in section 35 against increasing or diminishing the salary of any public officer is applicable to Judges, it must be applicable to all Judges in the State, and if this be so, what becomes of that provision of section 31, of Article 4, which authorizes the city of Baltimore to increase the salaries of the Judges of the Supreme Bench by the amount of \$500. If it be said that this last provision is simply a modifica-