

The first two months were mainly occupied with long and vigorous debate on the slavery and National allegiance questions, in which both sides expressed their views freely and often at great length. The majority frequently professed themselves as desiring perfect fairness,<sup>11</sup> and the records go to show that, as a rule, such was the case.<sup>12</sup> Considering the weight of the questions involved, and the close personal interest in them on the part of the members of the Convention, many of whom not only owned slaves, but had relatives and friends in the opposing armies, the debates show a remarkable lack of personal abuse and recriminations. This was at a time when the fiercest of campaigns were being waged by Grant and Lee in Virginia, and Sherman and Johnston in Georgia, while the state of Maryland itself suffered under an extensive invasion. In addition, the whole country was agitated over the political campaign preceding the presidential election of 1864, and charges of "lawless oppression" were answered with the terms of "traitor" and "Copperhead." It is pleasing to note that throughout the entire period of the Convention in Annapolis, the personal relations of the members were most pleasant. Great cordiality prevailed, and friendly discussion and quiet conversation on matters pertaining to the business of the Convention frequently took place as the members of the opposing parties met in their daily affairs outside the State House walls.

On Wednesday, April 27, as above stated, the Convention held its first meeting. Henry H. Goldsborough, of Talbot County, the State Comptroller, was elected president, receiving the entire vote of the fifty-eight Union men present. Ezekiel F. Chambers, of Kent, had been placed in nomination for the office by the opposition, but declined, and the twenty-one minority members did not vote. The remainder of the process of organization was speedily effected during the next few days. The standing com-

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<sup>11</sup> Deb., i, 118, 207, 350.

<sup>12</sup> Deb., i, 569.