

The 35th section was read as follows:

"Section 35. The General Assembly shall pass laws necessary to protect the property of the wife from the debts of the husband during her life, and for securing the same to her issue after her death."

Mr. CHAMBERS. It was perhaps very proper to have this provision in the old Constitution, but I suggest that laws are already passed covering this matter, and that there is now no necessity for its continuance. I move to strike out this section.

The motion was rejected.

The 36th section was read as follows:

"Section 36. Laws shall be passed by the General Assembly to protect from execution, a reasonable amount of property of a debtor, not exceeding in value the sum of five hundred dollars."

Mr. KING moved to strike out "shall" in line one, and to insert "may."

The amendment was rejected.

Sections 37 and 38 were read, and no amendments were offered.

The 39th section was read as follows:

"Section 39. The General Assembly shall pass laws to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of the State's interest in the works of internal improvement, in which the State is either stockholder or creditor; and to appropriate the proceeds arising therefrom towards the payment of the public debt of the State; and after the public debt shall have been fully paid off, or the sinking fund shall be equal to its liquidation, to create out of said proceeds a permanent fund for the support of public education."

Mr. CHAMBERS. It strikes me that, if this policy is to be adopted, it would better be carried out thoroughly. The section provides that the Legislature shall pass laws either to sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of the State's interest in the works of internal improvement. I think it is our business either to keep these works, or to dispose of them, not to make a temporary arrangement which will be an eternal source of conflict, collusion and intrigue. I cannot perceive any possible advantage to be derived from leasing or disposing of this property in any other way than by getting rid of it at once. I do not mean to enter into an argument upon the subject. I rise to move to erase the words "lease or otherwise dispose of," so as to make it imperative upon the Legislature to sell. I have no objection to giving time, that they may not be compelled to sell for an inadequate consideration; but I wish to avoid a temporary disposition of the property by which some favored individual perhaps may obtain the interest in the property. I wish the Legislature to sell, out and out, that the State may get rid of this property.

Mr. SCHLEY. I am myself in favor of the views expressed by the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers.) I want a decided policy,

so far as it is practicable. It seems to me that it is proper in this case. But in deference to the conflict of opinion in portions of the State that are deeply interested in these public works, I concurred in the propriety of the language reported by the committee and the provision made by the committee. I do not intend to enter into an explanation of the reasons that are adduced by those who are in favor of leasing or otherwise disposing of the interest in the canal and railroad companies, in regard to the general welfare of the region of country benefited by them. But those reasons, offered by the advocates of this policy, seemed to me to have some force. I therefore concurred in the report of the committee as it stands. I mention this that the Convention may know the reasons that influenced the committee in making the report to embrace these alterations. For my own part I should decidedly prefer that the State should divest itself of all interest in these public works and leave them to individual enterprise.

Mr. SANDS. I must confess, that before voting on this subject, I should like to have the information in the possession of the chairman of the committee. If there are good reasons urged by anybody in favor of farming out the State's interest in the public works, I should like to hear them; but unless I do hear them I must vote in support of the proposition of my friend from Kent. We all know what becomes of farmed property, how hard it is worked, how its capacities are taxed, how very seldom it goes back into the hands of the owner as it went into the hands of the lessee. I believe this rule will work more strongly in relation to the public works of the State, where no individual is particularly interested in keeping the lessee up to the terms of his lease, than in the private case where the owner of the property would be likely, if he could, to see to his interests.

Upon this general principle I am opposed to having the State farm out its interest in those public works. But if there be any good reason why this should be done I am anxious to hear it. If the chairman of the committee will give members of the Convention the information which he possesses in regard to this matter, so that I can act intelligently, I am willing, if the reasons appear sufficient, to join with the committee. If not, I must vote either for the State's retention of its interest in the public works, or their absolute sale. I should be glad to hear from my friend, from Frederick (Mr. Schley) the reasons urged upon him as one of the committee having this matter in charge, to favor this policy of leasing the State's interest in the public works.

Mr. SCHLEY. I would gladly answer the gentlemen's inquiry, if I felt myself competent to state the reasons as satisfactorily as those who are more interested than myself in