

Mr. ANDREW. As one of the parties signing this majority report, I desire to say in reply to my friend from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) that so far as the abolition of slavery is concerned, that question has already been submitted to the people, who sent us here for that purpose. The majority of this convention was sent here for the express purpose of abolishing slavery; after that question had been thoroughly discussed in the canvass before the people. The question of the sale of the State's interest in the public works was not discussed before the people, and I question very much whether the gentleman knows the wants of the people in regard to that particular matter. I question whether there are many upon this floor who know the wishes of their constituents in this respect. I confess that I do not, and hence my desire to have this latter clause inserted in this section.

Mr. SCHLEY. In signing the report of the minority of this select committee, I was principally induced to do so by the operation of this last clause of the section proposed by the majority of the committee, which the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) now proposes to strike out. Without debating the question of the authority of this convention to submit any side issue to a separate vote of the people at the time of the adoption or rejection of this constitution, I think it extremely inexpedient so to do, especially when the question is one of such importance to the State, and so little agitated before the people at this time as the proposition here submitted.

I have stated on this floor that I am in favor of the general policy of the sale of the public works, and so far as I can judge from the discussions that have been had here, such appears to be the prevailing sentiment of this convention. I was opposed to the legislative character which the various amendments to the original section of the legislative article involved. But there seems to be a disposition on the part of all who favor this general line of policy to attach conditions to this sale, and believing that it might as well be done now as perhaps at any other time, I did agree to the proposition of the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers,) which went less into details, and was more conservative in its amount than any other.

I propose to suggest now to the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) a modification of his proposition, which I trust he will accept. Strike out that portion of the section proposed by the majority of this select committee, which he proposes to strike out, and then insert the following:

"Provided, further, That no sale, or contract of sale, of the State's interest in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, shall go into effect until the same shall be ratified by the ensuing general assembly."

The majority of the committee have in their

report, in my judgment, decided upon the present as a very auspicious time for the sale of the State's interest in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company, with the reservation which their report contains, of the interest in the Washington branch of that road. Many persons of financial ability believe that after the present condition of things shall pass, there is an impending crash to come upon us, in which these stocks will, perhaps for a long time, be depreciated in value. That is my view. Therefore I would sell the State's interest in the railroad company now, when it can be exchanged for the debt of the State at the par value of the same. But I have no idea of having the canal disposed of at this time. There appears to be no one offering for it; there appears to be no probability that it will be sold to advantage at this time, and I am therefore reluctant that it should be included in the mandatory section which the majority of the committee has made. I want to hedge it about with some restrictions. I will not say that it shall be sold for blank millions of dollars. Such a restriction, when the blank is filled up, would either be a restriction to the extent of prohibiting the sale, or it would lead to a sale perhaps at a sacrifice. It is inadvisable, therefore, that it should bear that character.

I therefore ask the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) to accept the amendment I have offered, instead of his own. If he will not do so, then I will offer it as an amendment to his amendment.

Mr. CLARKE. I will accept the proposition of the gentleman from Frederick (Mr. Schley.)

The question was upon agreeing to the amendment as modified.

Mr. SCHLEY. If this amendment is adopted, of course I will withdraw from the support of the minority report, and will give my vote for the majority report as amended.

Mr. PUGH. I move to strike out the words "or any two of them," after the word "jointly."

The PRESIDENT. Not now in order; there is an amendment pending.

Mr. NUGLEY. I am glad to hear that the gentleman from Frederick (Mr. Schley) has come squarely over and placed himself upon the majority report. It is as the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) has said. I think we are sent here as the representatives of the people; and that if we have not the moral courage to stand up to the proper discharge of our duties in the exercise of our judgment, in doing what we conscientiously believe to be right, and submitting that to the people in the form of a constitution, then we are entirely out of place, and it is a question, not material with me whether we put in this last clause or not. I will either vote for that, or I will vote for the report of the majority, with the addition of the proposition of the gentleman from Frederick (Mr. Schley,) or