

which has called from me a large reply for the satisfaction of the Honorable House of Delegates, I shall be pardoned if I further use the occasion to give immediate circulation of what I deem a necessary and proper explanation to the public, for my own sake.

When I first saw the order of the House of Delegates, a copy of which has since been transmitted by you, my solicitude to ascertain its object so far as it might be interesting to myself, as none was therein defined,—I used some endeavor to obtain information of what it really meant. The result of my inquiry was that, although no allegation of any improper official act, on the part of my colleague or myself, had been stated before the House of Delegates, yet that in the political circles of Annapolis, it had been suggested as the basis of that order, that the Maryland Senators, on the occasion of confirming the appointment of General Wool, had *PURPOSELY absented themselves from their seats, so that the nomination might not be rejected!* This is the mildest form, in which I can state that gross imputation, which I learn that rumour has trumpeted to and fro, until it has become rife in the State.

I remember well, sir, that during the “civil dudgeon,” in the party canvass of October last, a friend of mine, with the best intentions, sent to me a newspaper printed in the city of Baltimore, in which this malignant surmise was embodied, as a direct charge, in language which my self respect will not allow me to repeat. It was then the object of my ineffable contempt and I let silence speak my scorn. I thought it had fallen still-born from the press. But if it be now the object of any one to resuscitate the despicable offspring of personal malignity and party rancor, and he shall avow such a charge, I cannot apprehend that one individual can be found in the House of Delegates of Maryland there to foster so base—so low—so unjust an imputation; or that any honorable man, whether political friend or adversary, who ever heard of my humble name and character, will hesitate to stand forth in my vindication, upon the bare ground of my reputation against naked falsehood. None but one, who is conscious of his own destitution of every feeling of virtue and independence, could invent the slander, and he who would propagate it, without proof or even plausible pretext, deserves no better title than the foul disgrace of society.

I have not deemed it too serious to utter these expressions of indignant self-defence, for the purpose I have declared, since I know well how easily the purest intentions may be blackened by malice, and false insinuations, if suffered to pass without notice, may be worked into a manufacture of public opinion, producing excitements and ill-blood, difficult to be allayed.

I beg you, sir, to assure the House of Delegates of Maryland of my high consideration, and I remain, respectfully,

Your Obedient Servant,

JOHN LEEDS KERR.

To THOMAS B. W. RANDALL, Esq.

*Chairman of a Committee of the House of Delegates
of Maryland, &c.*