

perhaps, obviate the difficulty, and he explained its purport.

Mr. BISER with a view to allow an opportunity of testing the practical operation of the existing rule, moved to lay the motion to amend on the table, but withdrew the motion at the request of—

Mr. BLAKISTONE, who replied to Mr. Brent.

After some further remarks from Mr. BRENT, The motion to lay the proposition of Mr. BLAKISTONE, on the table, was renewed, and was decided in the affirmative—ayes 40, noes 30.

So the proposition was laid on the table.

THE LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. PRESSTMAN, from the committee on the legislative department, submitted the following additional provisions:

“No person shall be imprisoned for debt.

“The Legislature shall not pass any law abolishing the relation of master and slave, as it now exists in this State.

“That the Legislature at its first session after the adoption of the Constitution, shall appoint one Commissioner to revise, digest and arrange the statute laws of the State, civil and criminal, and one commissioner to revise, simplify and abridge the rules and practice, pleadings, forms and proceedings of the courts of record of this State.

“The Legislature shall have power to protect by law from forced sale, a certain portion of the property of all heads of families.

“Taxation shall be equal and uniform throughout the State.”

Mr. P. repeated the statement which had been made on a former day by the Chairman of the Committee on the Legislative Department of the Government, (Mr. Johnson) that it was understood that no member of the committee was in any way bound to adhere to the provisions reported.

Mr. STEWART, of Baltimore city, (to the President.) Will the report go on the journal under the order adopted yesterday?

The PRESIDENT. It will go upon the journal, and also be printed in bill form.

Mr. JOHNSON suggested whether it would not be well that all the reports should go upon the journal, including those which had been made before the order of yesterday, as well as those which might be made subsequently?

Some conversation followed, in which Messrs. SPENCER, COST JOHNSON and the PRESIDENT took part, when

Mr. McLANE suggested that the reports referred to should be recorded on the journal when they came up for consideration.

Ordered accordingly.

Mr. BROWN moved that the Convention proceed to the consideration of the order of the day—the Report of the Committee on the Executive Department—but waived the motion at the request of Mr. JENIFER.

MASTER AND SLAVE.

Mr. JENIFER asked the Convention to take up

at this time, by unanimous consent, the article which he had reported on Saturday last, from the Committee No. 14, on the subject of master and slave.

The report was read as follows :

“The relation of master and slave in this State shall not be abolished, unless a bill to abolish the same shall be passed by a unanimous vote of the members of each branch of the General Assembly, and shall be published at least three months before a new election of delegates, and shall be confirmed by a unanimous vote of the members of each branch of the General Assembly, at the next regular constitutional session, after such new election, nor then without full compensation to the master for the property of which he shall be thereby deprived.”

Mr. JENIFER said, he supposed that the Convention would not occupy more than five minutes in the discussion of this report. It was a mere re-enactment of the provision of the old Constitution. It had been reported under the unanimous sanction of the committee, and there would not, he presumed, be a dissenting voice in the Convention. The prompt and ready action of the Convention upon a proposition which he believed would unite all voices, would be attended with at least this advantage—it would shew that one decisive step had been taken towards the enactment of a new Constitution.

Mr. BOWIE said, he hoped that his friend from Charles (Mr. Jenifer,) would consent to let this report lie on the table for the present. He (Mr. B.) much preferred the substance of the order introduced a day or two since, by the gentleman from Baltimore city, (Mr. Presstman,) which declared that the legislature should not have the power to abolish slavery in this State.

Mr. JENIFER repeated the statement he had made, that the report had been made by the unanimous vote of the Committee.

Mr. BOWIE said, he was not the less opposed to it on that account. He thought that the Legislature had just as much right to take his farm and give it to another man, by a unanimous vote, as they had to take any other property. He could see no distinction between the two cases. If no other gentleman, (continued Mr. B.) moves a substitute, I will.

Mr. JENIFER. I think my friend from Prince George's, (Mr. Bowie,) on looking over the report, will find that the provision is as comprehensive as any thing can be.

Mr. BOWIE. My objection to the clause is not captious. I do not quarrel with the phraseology, but with the idea. I regard it, as contrary to the bill of rights. I hold that no State or Government has the right to take private property, except for public use, and then only upon compensation made. I hold that the Legislature has no right from mere motives of caprice, merely in the exercise of a false and arbitrary power, to deprive a citizen of his property, and that it can only be done when the exigencies of the Government require that that property should be converted to its own use. I say, I know of no principle short of that, upon which this power can